



## Results from the Assessment Coordinators’ Needs Assessment Survey Fall 2017

The Assessment Office administered a needs assessment survey in fall 2017 in order to develop spring 2018 resources and workshops. We asked all current program-level assessment coordinators to complete the survey (Appendix A).

### Executive Summary

Out of 137 assessment coordinators, 77 returned the survey. The majority (69%) were from programs that had completed an assessment cycle. The top areas that respondents reported wanting technical assistance in were faculty engagement and interpretation of and use of results. Nearly 100% would be willing to use a format other than a traditional workshop for technical assistance—with short YouTube videos at the top of the list. Over 2/3 of those who responded plan to assess written communication, oral communication, and critical thinking in the next two years (note: this question only applied to undergraduate programs). About one third identified a technological challenge(s) related to the assessment process such as storing student work. In regards to attending a spring 2018 poster exhibit, 47 out of 67 would likely attend. Finally, the overall effect of moving from an annual reporting cycle to a 2-3 year cycle appears to be positive.

Based on these results, the Assessment Office plans the following actions:

1. Offer training assistance via YouTube and webinars and advertise regular office hours for walk-ins and phone conversations.
2. Develop and offer workshops on the following topics: faculty engagement, interpretation of results, use of results to improve student learning, methods to gather evidence of learning.
3. Work with faculty and administrators to address the technological challenges of collecting and storing student work and of presenting assessment results.
4. Hold the next poster exhibit in 2019.
5. Maintain the 2-3 year reporting cycle.

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### Response Rate

The response rate was 57%: 77 out of 137 assessment coordinators returned the survey. Most, but not all respondents, answered all questions. Thus, the number of respondents for each question varies.

Assessment Coordinator responsible for . . .	Total	Respondents
Graduate and undergraduate program assessment	27	<b>18 (67%)</b>
Graduate program assessment only	64	<b>33 (53%)</b>
Undergraduate program assessment only	46	<b>26 (57%)</b>
TOTAL	137	<b>77 (56%)</b>

The majority of respondents were from programs that had completed an assessment cycle, which includes creating learning outcomes, gathering and evaluating learning evidence, and using results for program-level changes.

- 97% developed student learning outcomes
  - 92% have a curriculum map
  - 74% collected learning evidence
  - 71% have tool(s) to evaluate learning evidence (e.g., a rubric)
  - 61% have summarized and interpreted results
  - 69% used assessment results for learning improvement or program evolution
- N=75-76

The assessment coordinators responsible for both graduate and undergraduate program assessment reported **lower levels of assessment cycle completion** compared to those responsible for either graduate or undergraduate program assessment.

Assessment Coordinator responsible for . . .	Summarized and interpreted results	Used assessment results
Graduate & undergraduate prg. assessment (n=17)	50%	53%
Graduate program assessment only (n=31)	74%	75%
Undergraduate program assessment only (n=26)	54%	73%

## Findings

### A. The top areas that respondents reported wanting technical assistance were faculty engagement and interpretation of and use of results.

- Get faculty colleagues involved in the assessment process (50%)
  - Engage faculty colleagues in interpreting results (42%)
  - Take action on assessment results to improve student learning (39%)
  - Select a method to gather evidence of learning (36%)
- N=67-72

The areas in which the fewest respondents wanted assistance involved revisiting student learning outcomes (9%), revising the curriculum map (14%), and aligning course learning outcomes to program outcome (20%).

While just over half of those responsible for only graduate program assessment wanted technical assistance, overall, 74% of assessment coordinators indicated they wanted technical assistance.

Assessment Coordinator responsible for . . .	Wanted technical assistance offered
Graduate & undergraduate program assessment	83%
Graduate program assessment only	58%
Undergraduate program assessment only	74%
OVERALL (n=75)	74%

Thirteen<sup>1</sup> respondents answered the open-ended question, “What other assistance would you want?” Two comments were about hiring a full-time assessment coordinator; the remaining comments were on various issues such as how to engage faculty, help video recording oral presentations, the assessment report, and so forth (see Appendix B).

In-person workshops should be offered on these days and times:

- Monday and Tuesday, 11:00 AM - 3:00 PM
- Wednesday and Friday, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM
- Thursday, 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM

**B. 99% (69 out of 70) of respondents reported they were *somewhat likely* or *will absolutely use* a format other than traditional workshops, with YouTube receiving the highest percentage of *will absolutely use*.**

Format/mode of assistance	Will Absolutely Use	Somewhat Likely to Use
YouTube instructional videos (5-10 minutes)	39%	34%
Webinars (45-60 minutes)	24%	36%
Dedicated office hours for walk-in consultations	17%	55%
Roundtable sharing session with a facilitator & faculty participants	16%	64%

**C. Over 2/3 of those who responded (n=43-49) plan to assess written communication, oral communication, and critical thinking in the next two years.** Fewer—but nearly half—planned to assess quantitative reasoning and information literacy.

- 84% plan to assess written communication
- 76% plan to assess oral communication
- 70% plan to assess critical thinking
- 48% plan to assess information literacy
- 47% plan to assess quantitative reasoning

*N=43-49; primarily includes respondents who oversee undergraduate program assessment because these are undergraduate learning objectives; only 7 respondents who oversee graduate program assessment answered this question.*

**D. Only 36% of respondents identified a technological challenge(s) related to the assessment process,** with those who oversee graduate program assessment as the lowest of the three groups.

Assessment Coordinator responsible for . . .	Checked one or more technological challenges
Graduate & undergraduate prg. assessment (n=17)	65%
Graduate program assessment only (n=31)	19%
Undergraduate program assessment only (n=25)	36%
OVERALL (n=73)	36%

<sup>1</sup> Does not include the respondents who wrote, “na,” “none,” etc.

The top technological challenges for assessment coordinators were **presenting assessment results (23%)** and **storing student work (22%)**. The top challenges varied by the degree level(s) the assessment coordinator was responsible for.

Assessment Coordinator responsible for . . .	Top technological challenges
Graduate & undergraduate prg. assessment (n=17)	Collecting student work (47%) Storing student work (47%)
Graduate program assessment only (n=31)	Presenting assessment results (13%) Storing student work (13%)
Undergraduate program assessment only (n=25)	Presenting assessment results (28%) Sharing student work (24%)
OVERALL (n=73)	Presenting assessment results (23%) Storing student work (22%)

E. In regards to a **spring 2018 poster exhibit, 7 out of 67 respondents would definitely attend** and another 40 would attend if their schedule permitted. That is, 47 would definitely/likely attend. The remaining were unsure.

F. **The overall effect of moving from an annual reporting cycle to a 2-3 year cycle appears to be positive:** assessment activities continue for most programs, some programs see opportunities for improved assessment practices, and fewer reports means less faculty time is needed. 40% of respondents reported a positive change and 33% reported no change (and only one of the respondents who selected *no change* stated that no assessment activities were taking place).

The 2-3 year reporting cycle on program assessment activities:	Percentage (n=70)
Positive change	40%
No change	33%
Unsure	16%
Mixed change (some positive and some negative changes)	10%
Negative change	1%

Respondents were asked to explain (see Appendix B) and three themes emerged from the 48 explanations:

1. **Assessment activities continued as before** for 13 programs that selected *no change* and for one program that selected *positive change*. In the case of professional accredited programs, the UHM reporting cycle appears to make little to no difference.
2. **Improved assessment practices** because more time between reports for 11 programs that selected *positive change* and for one program that selected *no change*.
3. **Less faculty time** for five programs that selected *mixed change* and for four programs that selected *positive change*.

Also, four of the programs that reported a *mixed change* explained that **(re)motivating faculty would be difficult.**

### **Conclusion & Actions**

The survey provided useful and actionable information for the Assessment Office and we are grateful to the assessment coordinators who took the time to submit a survey. The Assessment Office plans to do the following:

1. Offer training assistance via YouTube and webinars and advertise regular office hours for walk-ins and phone conversations.
2. Develop and offer workshops on the following topics:
  - Methods to get faculty colleagues involved in the assessment process
  - Strategies to engage faculty colleagues in interpreting results
  - Examples of acting on assessment results to improve student learning
  - Strategies to select a method to gather evidence of learning
3. Work with faculty and administrators to address the technological challenges of collecting and storing student work and of presenting assessment results.
4. Hold the next poster exhibit in 2019.
5. Maintain the 2-3 year reporting cycle.
  - a. Periodically send reminders to assessment coordinators regarding report due dates and report questions.
  - b. Encourage assessment coordinators to serve a minimum 3-year term or use an effective hand-off procedure between coordinators.

## Appendix A: Survey Questions

The Assessment Office provides technical support to degree programs so faculty can use learning outcomes assessment results to help improve student learning and evolve the program. Please let us know your department/program's needs and capacity to plan and implement learning outcomes assessment projects. We will aggregate the survey responses and use them to plan our 2017-18 workshops and online materials.

This survey should take fewer than 10 minutes. Your responses are anonymous; only aggregated responses will be reported. Please contact us if you have questions.

Thank you for your time. We appreciate it.  
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Phone: 956-6669 or 956-4283

Assessment (of learning outcomes) is an ongoing, iterative process consisting of the following steps:

1. defining learning outcomes for the degree program;
2. determining "learning opportunities" and mapping them using a "curriculum map" or equivalent;
3. gathering evidence of learning and evaluating that evidence (e.g., using a rubric, applying an exam answer key);
4. analyzing and interpreting the evidence; and
5. using this information to improve student learning / evolve the program.

### 1) Which steps of the program learning assessment process has your program completed?

See SLO examples here: <http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/assessment/howto/outcomes.htm>

See an explanation of curriculum map here: <http://www.manoa.hawaii.edu/assessment/howto/mapping.htm>

Completed      Not Completed      Not Sure

- a. Our degree program(s) has student learning outcomes (SLOs).
- b. Our degree program(s) has a curriculum map.
- c. We have collected learning evidence (e.g., student papers, presentations, capstone projects, art performance/exhibit).
- d. We have developed ways to evaluate learning evidence (e.g., rubric, exam answer key).
- e. We have summarized and interpreted the results.
- f. We used assessment results for learning improvement / program evolution.

### 2) Does your undergraduate degree program(s) plan to assess student learning in these areas in the next two years

Yes      No      Unsure      Not Applicable--graduate program

- a. Critical Thinking
- b. Information Literacy
- c. Oral Communication
- d. Quantitative Reasoning
- e. Written Communication

### 3) In which areas would you (or your faculty colleagues) want technical assistance in 2017-2018? (such as workshops, online materials, consultations, YouTube videos, webinars, etc.)

Yes      No      Unsure

- a. Revise student learning outcomes
- b. Revise the curriculum map
- c. Align course outcomes with program outcomes

- d. Align program outcomes with institutional learning objectives
- e. Select a method to gather evidence of learning
- f. Create/modify a rubric to evaluate student learning
- g. Create/modify a “signature assignment” to gather evidence of student learning across sections/courses)
- h. Develop/modify a capstone project for program assessment
- i. Use a portfolio of student work for program assessment
- j. Present assessment findings in charts/graphs
- k. Engage faculty colleagues in interpreting results
- l. Take action on assessment results to improve student learning
- m. Create an assessment plan
- n. Learn how to complete the Assessment Report
- o. Get faculty colleagues involved in the assessment process

**4) What other assistance would you want the Assessment Office to provide in 2017-18?**

**5) Do these present a technological challenge for your program(s)?**

A Technological Challenge      Not a Technological Challenge      Unsure

- a. Collecting student work
- b. Storing student work
- c. Sharing student work
- d. Evaluating student work
- e. Analyzing student work
- f. Presenting assessment results

**6) Which days/times are best for in-person workshops? (check all that apply)**

9:00 AM -11:00 AM      11:00 AM -1:00 PM      1:00 PM - 3:00 PM      3:00 PM - 5:00 PM

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

**7) The Assessment Office is considering alternative formats to deliver technical assistance and support. How likely/unlikely are you to use the following?**

Will Absolutely Use      Somewhat Likely to Use      Somewhat Unlikely to Use      Will Definitely Not Use

- a. Roundtable sharing session with a facilitator and faculty participants
- b. Webinars (45-60 minutes)
- c. YouTube instructional videos (5-10 minutes)
- d. Dedicated office hours for walk-in consultations

**8) What other formats of training/support do you prefer?**

**9) If we were to organize a campus-wide assessment poster exhibit in mid-April 2018, would you attend?**

- I will definitely attend.
- I will attend if my schedule permits.
- I am not sure.

**10) In 2016, the Assessment Office moved to collecting your program's assessment report every 2-3 years instead of collecting every year. How did this move to collecting reports every 2-3 years change your program's assessment activities?**

- No change
- Positive change
- Negative change
- Mixed change (some positive and some negative changes)
- Unsure

**11) Please explain your response.**

**12) Optional:** If you would like either Monica or Yao to contact you about learning outcomes assessment, please input your name, department, and email address or please contact us directly.

Thank you for your time. We appreciate it.

## Appendix B: Answers to Open-ended Questions

### ***What other assistance would you want the Assessment Office to provide in 2017-18?***

13 respondents commented (excludes "na," "none," etc.):

1. A full-time assessment coordinator (or several) for our college.
2. Resources to hire a full time person to do the assessment.
3. We are understaffed and assessment, while crucial, feels distracting. Can you suggest tips for dealing with this?
4. The problem is UH doesn't trust the faculty to judge best about proof of student learning. An easier method to gather such evidence to convince you (the administrators) of such proof of learning would be useful. The assessment process is so awfully time-consuming that it disproportionately cuts into our main duties.
5. Make a presentation in our faculty meeting to enlighten everyone at once.
6. As the person who gathers the information, ways to engage faculty in the process.
7. It seems to me that there are tacit norms on the assessment committee that I don't fully understand.
8. Help in videotaping oral presentations would be much appreciated.
9. Ongoing assessment strategies for departmental SLOs
10. We will be in the process of revising program key assessments and SLOs so may value some feedback in these areas.
11. On-line method to collect data from faculty at department level
12. Would like to know about the format and questions of the assessment report--will they change?
13. Evaluation planning for grant proposal development

### ***The Assessment Office is considering alternative formats to deliver technical assistance and support. Other:***

15 respondents commented (excludes "na," "none," "I'm good," etc.):

1. answering of questions via email
2. Coercion...
3. Face to face time with coordinators to ask questions. Monica and Yao are amazingly helpful and respect our dignity.
4. Face to face with opportunities to ask questions
5. Group collaboration with other assessment coordinators.
6. It would be helpful for us to invite someone from the assessment office to come to a meeting of my faculty to help facilitate a conversation about assessment and help us to develop a plan, etc. The topic most pressing at this time is finding an existing assignment that we can collect and analyze to see how course and program SLOs are being met. I will likely reach out to you folks at some point to talk story about this possibility and see how we might move forward.
7. lectures or consultations by evaluation experts
8. Library of assessment templates/completed assessment reports
9. Lots of samples
10. One-on-one conferences.
11. Online library of resources (starting from basics upwards)
12. Online Zoom meetings--we have Zoom platforms
13. seminar
14. synchronous
15. Webinars

***In 2016, the Assessment Office moved to collecting your program's assessment report every 2-3 years instead of collecting every year. How did this move to collecting reports every 2-3 years change your program's assessment activities?***

Positive change: 19 explanations (out of 23)

1. Allows larger data sets for assessment and makes it possible to look for trends rather than looking at a one year at a time.
2. Given heavy service loads for all faculty in our department, any change that reduces the reporting burden is a positive one.
3. It allowed for a longer assessment cycle.
4. It allows more to improve curriculum and SLO's before the next report is due.
5. It gives us time to think things through instead of mechanically doing something just to meet a deadline. The additional time will provide opportunity for the curriculum committee to have serious discussions and to work on what needs to be done. How helpful was the yearly collected data? In what ways did the assessment office and the program/department use the yearly collected data?
6. It is a huge burden to have to produce these reports in addition to our teaching duties.
7. Less paperwork.
8. Makes life a lot easier.
9. One year was a small increment. Too small. It allows more time for an assessment of actual progress as certain courses must be taken and more students will have taken them.
10. Positive in the sense that the process doesn't feel as rushed and frenetic.
11. The change is giving us time to evaluate our program's SLO and allowing faculty to get engage in the entire assessment process.
12. The new schedule provides more time to collect, analyze and consider programmatic change! In the past, we were scrambling to put the reports together each year and didn't have the time needed to work closely with faculty. Thank you for asking!
13. this is better a see have to do all the work for ABET as well
14. Until now, I am not sure the procedure of the assessment for a Ph.D. program.
15. We are undergoing a curriculum change, and so we are creating a grid and curriculum map to align with learning outcomes (course, program and institution). So that will take a few years. We also have ample evidence from undergraduate students in the form of student projects, published work and reviewed student works at regional competitions where we have received awards. That feedback has been a useful demonstration of learning outcomes and what we need to work on. We are making adjustments accordingly, as well as coordinating with Community Colleges.
16. We have had new accreditation mandates and this timing as allowed us to get our student learning objectives realigned to meet the mandates.
17. We have more time to integrate and implement changes between reporting periods.
18. Well, it was a bit of a relief to not have to report so often although the data is collected. I appreciate not having to report this year because we were in the process of getting major program modifications approved by the [REDACTED]. We will need to implement the changes in 2018 so this allowed some breathing room to work on transitioning the programs.
19. Yearly reports put too much pressure on the single faculty responsible and was of limited value in assessing trends.

No change: 16 explanations (out of 23)

1. I was able to collect more evidence (term papers) to assess. I'm on a learning curve for understanding assessment, having taken over from [REDACTED]. Though she handed me instructions before she went on leave, I did not absorb all the details. This semester I am trying to understand the assessment committee's procedures. FYI, I have applied for sabbatical leave in Spring 2018.
2. Our program collects and evaluates student performance annually whether or not the Assessment Office requires a report.

3. Our program has defined objectives for assessment improvement that do not depend on the reporting cycle.
4. To my knowledge, we don't conduct assessment activities. Changing the frequency of reporting did not change that.
5. We are a multidisciplinary program and our students take courses from other disciplines so it is important that we assess their progress to meeting our program SLO's each year. We are responsive to student concerns in being able to access course content in their chosen study plans whether it is in other disciplines or within our own program. It allows us to plan our course offerings and content.
6. We are an accredited program, so we need to complete annual assessments anyway. We are in a continual process of working to improve our department's assessment processes.
7. We are continuing to collect our assessment annually and to analyze and report back to faculty, but we no longer have the pressure to meet the deadlines to post information to the MAO.
8. We continue to assess all our graduate students. We are concerned that they graduate on time and stick to their time line plans and goals so we must monitor them monthly at a minimum and advise their committee if they start to fall behind. We have used our last Assessment Report for a starting point and have been trying different approaches to improve.
9. We do the same activities
10. we have continued to engage in assessment activities every year so no change there; not having to fill out the assessment report yearly means less stress and more time for reflection and implementation of changes.
11. we have to collect assessment data every year to maintain our Program's accreditation
12. We need to do it for ABET
13. We still collect some assessment data every year.
14. We will continue doing our assessment regardless of report schedules.
15. We will continue to collect data annually and analyze the data each year. Only the report will be written to present all of the data and the analysis of the data over 2 to 3 years. I like this rather than a yearly report although ask me after I've had to write the report with 2 to 3 years of data and analyses.
16. Workshops have to be new information will be valuable to attend. Please allow excuse if workshop is basic and not new information to whom were attendant in the past.

Unsure: 5 explanations (out of 11)

1. I am new to this role so I am unsure of the impact of this change.
2. This decreased my workload, and in that sense is positive. We were not doing much assessment activity anyway, so I'm not sure if the overall change is positive or negative.
3. This is only my second year at the university.
4. We have no easy on-line method to collect, store and analyze data provided by faculty. Maybe you should collect it directly.
5. We haven't written the report yet and haven't yet determined if any changes occurred.

Mixed change (some positive and some negative changes): 7 explanations (out of 7)

1. I was under the impression that the assessment reports had been discontinued indefinitely, and was surprised to discover that they have just been changed to every 2-3 years. Even though I am a strong believer in assessment and its value to the evolution of programs, I also know that programs that are chronically understaffed will have difficulty planning for, conducting, analyzing, and discussing results of assessment, whether its once a year or every three years. (You guys probably know who I am now, right?)
2. It was less overwhelming, but also harder to motivate faculty interest.
3. My pestering of faculty for student evidence and their compliance has diminished. We used to evaluate all student work in May and the past two years, this work got pushed off for other 'urgent' things. Our program is always pushing toward some new urgent deadline and Assessment is not a priority. It's 'extra' not essential. I wish I knew how to change that.
4. Positive in that it alleviated pressure to collect/analyze data quickly. Negative in that it can lead to procrastination on the part of all faculty involved in this.

5. The move backed off the pressure on me. This move was helpful because (a) I have a lot on my plate, (b) I have had insufficient help within the department on a host of matters, and (c) other faculty members in the department are in the same boat. The move gave me some breathing space. The move was unhelpful in terms of assessment progress because other matters moved in, and progress on assessment essentially ground to a halt. I need to start up again.
6. Time - it take significant time to undertake what is being asked
7. When it was required every year, I did it every year. It was a nice "prompt." Can you continue to send an annual prompt, even if you don't collect reports every year?

Negative change: 1 explanation (out of 1)

1. Because there was no pressing deadline it was hard to prioritize assessment and therefore not much happened over the next year. Previously we made good steps forward in every area. This time we made good steps in the areas where we had the most room for growth, but we did not make continued progress in our programs that were already running with assessment. Things just stopped.