



# 2021 MSU Program Assessment Report

*Prepared by Assistant Provost Martha Peters*

## Introduction

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Program Assessment is a participatory, iterative process used to provide a program with feedback on its performance with the intent of helping it improve the program and improve student learning. All programs at MSU are expected to conduct annual assessment of their programs, both for continuous quality improvement and compliance with accreditation by MSU's regional accreditor, Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). Programs that conduct an external accreditation may submit documentation required by that accrediting body in place of their annual MSU assessment report.

The assessment process is led by the Office of Academic Affairs and guided by a University committee made of representatives from each College. The following report contains information about Program Assessment at MSU, the results of the 2020-21 Assessment, and information about the Assessment and Outcomes Committee (AOC).

## Assessment Process

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This report covers results from program assessment reports that were submitted in the fall of 2021 for data collected during the 2020-2021 academic year. The assessment process requires programs to gather and analyze data during the academic year, discuss the results and possible changes as a faculty at the beginning of the next academic year, and submit the annual report to the Office of Academic Affairs by October 15<sup>th</sup>. Members of the University Assessment and Outcomes Committee review the reports and provide feedback which is provided to the program leads and department heads by January 10<sup>th</sup>. This feedback is intended to provide guidance to the program as they conduct their next program assessment.

## Assessment Results

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The list of programs at MSU is constantly evolving, as new options, certificates, and degree programs are approved, and others move into moratorium. Maintaining an accurate list has proven to be more difficult than expected, since the tracking by different offices for such a list varies. However, building off a mostly comprehensive list built in Summer 2020 by the Office of Academic Affairs, the list of programs was updated in summer 2021 with information from the Registrar's Office, the CIM system, and verification with departments and colleges as needed. The data provided in Table 1 about programs is from this list, maintained by the Assistant Provost.

Program Assessment Reports are due annually for undergraduate programs and biannually for graduate programs, with data from two years included in the graduate program reports. Year 0

reports were an option for programs that wanted to revise their Assessment Plan. Programs that are accredited by an external accrediting agency (such as Nursing or Engineering) are not expected to submit an MSU Assessment Report, rather they are asked to submit documentation from their required reports and updates to their external accrediting agency. Table 2 contains information about the Assessment Reports and Year 0 plans submitted by College. Programs are expected to submit a full assessment report after submitting a Year 0 report.

**Table 1: Program Assessment Report Expectations**

	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019
Total number of undergraduate programs	242	199	161
Total number of graduate programs	126	119	107
Total number of programs	368	318	268
Total number of externally accredited programs	88	54	
New programs	4	3	2
Graduate programs on other year cycle (of 2-year)	92	44	53
Other*	1		
Expected reports	183	217	213
Submitted reports	156	134	176
% Programs with reports	85%	62%	83%

\* Life Scholars, non-degree program

**Table 2: Programs Assessed by College**

	# Programs	# Reports Expected in 2021	#Assessment Reports Received	# Year 0 Reports Received	% received
Agriculture	68	47	29	14	91%
A & A	18	3	3	0	100%
JJCBE	13	1	0	1	100%
EHHD	69	17	11	1	71%
NACOE	51	0	0	0	NA
Gallatin College	18	15	12	2	93%
Honors	2	2	0	2	100%
Letters and Science	118	98	43	38	83%
MRJCON	7	0	0	0	NA
<b>MSU TOTAL</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>85%</b>

The University-wide response rate of 85% is back to per-COVID levels of reporting, but 100% reporting is the goal. It is anticipated that regular and timely reminders to programs about the process in 2022 will result in a greater percentage of programs submitting assessment reports for the 2021-2022 academic year.

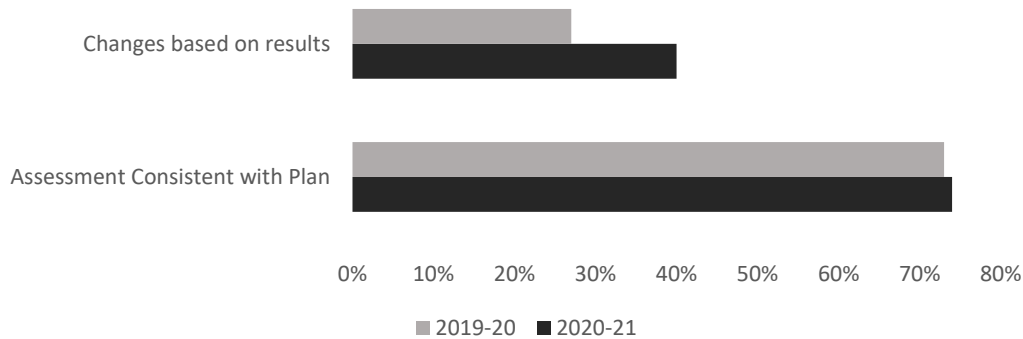
## Building a Culture of Assessment

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In the past, the annual assessment report contained questions about self-reported data on the elements of program assessment including: 1) whether data were collected as defined by the assessment plan; 2) if the population or unbiased samples of collected assignments are scored by at least two faculty members using scoring rubrics to assure inter-rater reliability; 3) if areas where the acceptable performance threshold has not been met are highlighted; 4) if assessment scores were presented at a program/unit faculty meeting; 5) closing the loop and 6) if faculty reviewed the assessment results and responded accordingly. While these elements are important, the AOC felt that the self-reported data was not necessarily reliable. As a result, this checklist was removed from the assessment form.

Two self-reported measures that were kept were: 1) Was the assessment conducted consistent with the assessment plan? and 2) Will there be any changes based on the results of the assessment? Data from these two self-reported measures for the past two years are listed below.

**Figure 1: Percentage of Reports With Positive Response on Two Measures (n=43)**



The increased percentage of programs indicating they plan to make changes in their curriculum or assessment process from 2019-20 to 2020-21 (27% to 40%) is seen as a positive step toward increased awareness and value of the assessment process by those involved.

The review of assessment reports this year included ratings on a rubric for program elements of 1) Program Learning Outcomes, 2) the Assessment Plan; 3) the Assessment Findings; 4) Sharing Results with Faculty; 5) Changes in Response to Findings; and 6) Closing the Loop. Ratings were based on a five-point scale – Inadequate to Outstanding, with descriptions for each level included in the feedback report for the programs (Appendix E). Programs received a report with their ratings on the elements, as well as commendations and recommendations on their report. In the future, the plan is to give programs their historical ratings as well as ratings for the current year, so they can see improvement. This revised feedback form is designed to de-emphasize requirements for a specific type of assessment, allowing programs to gather and reflect on data and then make curricular changes based on data and a process that is meaningful to them.

## Summary of 2021 Assessment Results

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### **Areas of Strength**

1. The Assessment Process and tools seem to be more institutionalized in program workflow. In the past, use of the correct form was a significant barrier to programs submitting assessment reports for feedback, and many reports were submitted after the deadline. In this cycle, most reports were received by the October 15<sup>th</sup> deadline, which was moved back from a prior year deadline of September 15<sup>th</sup> and they were submitted on the correct form.
2. As described above, programs reported an increased expectation of making changes based on assessment data than in the prior year. This may indicate that programs see the assessment process as useful in providing information about student learning and changes that need to be made to increase achievement of program learning outcomes. Efforts by the Office of Academic Affairs and AOC members to emphasize the role of assessment in continuous program improvement rather than compliance probably helped promote this as well.

### **Areas of Attention**

1. In many cases, there were reasonable attempts to collect data on student learning. However, there still seems to be a gap in identifying areas in the curriculum or program that can be adjusted based on that data to increase student learning. Programs seem more inclined to adjust the assessment process or thresholds than to make changes to the curriculum.
2. Many reports did not include description of an authentic opportunity for faculty to discuss the assessment data. Since faculty own the curriculum, this is a critical component of effective program assessment. An email exchange of the findings or perfunctory reporting at a faculty meeting, as many programs reported, probably does not allow for the discussion needed.
3. Graduate Programs often report KPIs or other output measures as measures of program assessment, rather than data on student learning. While these are important measures for a graduate program, they do not provide actionable information about student learning. The AOC will be working on some guidelines in Spring 2022 to assist graduate programs in developing processes that gather information on student learning.

### **Areas for Continued Monitoring**

1. While reports have improved over the years, there is still an opportunity to provide training and guidance on assessment elements such as assessable program learning outcomes and identifying appropriate artifacts for student learning.
2. As stated above, the University wide compliance was at 84% for program assessment reports received. This should be at 100% in the future.

## Assessment and Outcomes Committee

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The Assessment and Outcomes Committee (AOC) monitors and guides the assessment process, providing feedback to departments submitting reports and developing templates and information about the assessment process.

**Table 3: 2021 AOC Membership**

Agriculture	Tracy Dougher
Arts and Architecture	Ralph Johnson (S 2021) Jim Zimpel (F2021)
Business	Tia Brown
EHHD	Ann Ewbank
Engineering	Brett Gunnick
Letters and Science	David Eitle
	Maggie Thorsen
Nursing	Susan Raph
Gallatin College	Sarah Maki
Honors	Logan Schulz
OPA	Ian Godwin
Graduate School	Craig Ogilvie
	Donna Neegard
Office of Academic Affairs	Martha Cabell Peters

### 2021 AOC Accomplishments

The AOC met regularly (biweekly or monthly) during the spring and fall of 2021. Specific accomplishments of the committee included:

1. ***Development of Principles for Program Assessment Reports*** (Appendix A): this document describes which programs are expected to submit annual assessment reports. It is on the Office of Academic Affairs website under Program Assessment.
2. ***Exemplars of Program Assessment Reports*** and examples of elements of the Report were posted on the Office of Academic Affairs website as a resource for programs undergoing the assessment process.
3. ***Development of a Rubric and Instrument for scoring assessment reports***  
This rubric was developed to provide consistent feedback on a five-point scale (Inadequate to Outstanding) to programs on assessment report elements of: Program Learning Outcomes, Assessment Plan, Assessment Findings, Sharing Results with Faculty, Changes in Response to Findings and Closing the Loop. AOC members completed a Qualtrics survey with the rubric questions to provide feedback on reports (Appendix D).
4. ***Revised form for program assessment reports***: The Committee continues to revise its processes to make the process of program assessment simpler for programs and to gather data useful for measuring University improvement in the assessment process. In December of 2021 after discussion of the 2021 assessment process, the committee revised the program assessment form to include specific questions about curricula or programmatic changes based

both on the assessment data and on any other data that may have been collected by the department.

5. ***Expanded membership:*** The NWCCU standards about program learning outcomes and assessment refer to the “Central role of faculty” in the process, so the AOC recommended that there be a Faculty Senate representative on the committee. Although the Faculty Senate representative was not able to attend meetings in 2021, it is hoped that moving forward in 2022, there will be a Faculty Senate member on the committee.
6. ***Discussions around relevant assessment topics:*** how to reward and motivate faculty and department involvement, how to gather data from existing MSU systems to inform assessment, a demonstration by the College of EHHD on software they are piloting to track and monitor assessment and accreditation compliance, building a culture of assessment at MSU.

## Appendices

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- A - Principles on Assessment Report Submission
- B - Assessment Report Form
- C - Year 0 Report Form
- D - AOC Rubric for feedback
- E - Feedback form provided to programs

Principles for Academic Program Assessment Report submission:

- Undergraduate academic programs are expected to submit a Program Assessment Report annually. The report is due on October 15<sup>th</sup> and should report on Assessment activities conducted the prior year. Multiple options of one degree can be submitted on the same report.
- Graduate Academic Program reports are due biannually on October 15<sup>th</sup> but should include data from the prior two years. Biannual reporting allows graduate programs, which generally have smaller cohorts than undergraduate programs, to collect enough data to analyze for assessment.
- Externally accredited academic programs do not need to submit MSU Program Assessment Reports. They should, however, submit a copy of the report (and interim reports) prepared for the external accrediting body to Assistant Provost, Martha Peters (mpeters@montana.edu).
- Minors that do not have the same name as the major, should submit an assessment report annually. Assessment of minors with the same name as a major can be included in the assessment report for the major.
- Certificate programs should be assessed either annually or biannually depending on their level (undergraduate or graduate).
- Academic Programs that have not previously conducted assessment can submit a Year 0 report one time, after which they will be expected to submit a full assessment report.
- Academic Programs that do not lead to a degree or certificate do not need to submit a program assessment report (i.e., Molecular Biosciences, Life Scholars, pre-med advising)



## **Annual Program Assessment Report**

Undergraduate Assessment reports are to be submitted annually by program/s. The report deadline is October 15<sup>th</sup>.

Academic Year Assessed:

College:

Department:

Submitted by:

Graduate Assessment reports are to be submitted annually by program/s. The report deadline is October 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **Program(s) Assessed:**

*Indicate all majors, minors, certificates and/or options that are included in this assessment:*

<b>Majors/Minors/Certificate</b>	<b>Options</b>

The Assessment Report should contain the following elements, which are outlined in this template:

1. Assessment Plan, Schedule, and Sources
2. What was done this assessment cycle – including rubrics, how data was collected, and who analyzed it
3. What was learned – including areas of strength and areas for improvement
4. How we responded and plans for improvement
5. Closing the loop

Sample reports and guidance can be found at:

[https://www.montana.edu/provost/assessment/program\\_assessment.html](https://www.montana.edu/provost/assessment/program_assessment.html)

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### **1. Assessment Plan, Schedule and Data Source.**

- a) ***Please provide a multi-year assessment schedule that will show when all program learning outcomes will be assessed, and by what criteria (data). (You may use the table provided, or you may delete and use a different format).***

<b>ASSESSMENT PLANNING CHART</b>					
<b>PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOME</b>	<b>2020-2021</b>	<b>2021-2022</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b><i>Data Source*</i></b>


*\*Data sources can be items such as randomly selected student essays or projects, specifically designed exam questions, student presentations or performances, or a final paper. Do not use course evaluations or surveys as primary sources for data collection.*

**b) What are your threshold values for which you demonstrate student achievement?  
(Example provided in the table should be deleted before submission)**

Threshold Values		
PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOME	Threshold Value	Data Source
<b>Example:</b> 6) Communicate in written form about fundamental and modern microbiological concepts	The threshold value for this outcome is for 75% of assessed students to score above 2 on a 1-4 scoring rubric.	Randomly selected student essays

**2. What Was Done**

a) Was the completed assessment consistent with the plan provided?

Y                      N

\_\_\_\_\_

b) If no, please explain why the plan was altered.

c) How were data collected? (Please include method of collection and sample size).

d) Explain the assessment process, and who participated in the analysis of the data.

e) Please provide a rubric that demonstrates how your data was evaluated.

(Example provided below should be deleted before submission – your rubric may be very different, it just needs to explain the criteria used for evaluating student achievement).

Indicators	Beginning - 1	Developing- 2	Competent- 3	Accomplished- 4
Analysis of Information, Ideas, or Concepts	Identifies problem types	Focuses on difficult problems with persistence	Understands complexity of a problem	Provides logical interpretations of data
Application of Information, Ideas, or Concepts	Uses standard solution methods	Provides a logical interpretation of the data	Employs creativity in search of a solution	Achieves clear, unambiguous conclusions from the data
Synthesis	Identifies intermediate steps required that connects previous material	Recognizes and values alternative problem solving methods	Connects ideas or develops solutions in a clear coherent order	Develops multiple solutions, positions, or perspectives
Evaluation	Check the solutions against the issue	Identifies what the final solution should determine	Recognizes hidden assumptions and implied premises	Evaluates premises, relevance to a conclusion and adequacy of support for conclusion.

This type of rubric can be used for all levels of assessment (the anticipated evaluation score may vary according to the course level). Some rubrics/assessments may be more tailored for courses (e.g. designed to assess outcomes in upper division courses or for lower division) and therefore the scores might be similar across course levels. Or, if you are assessing more basic learning outcomes, you might expect outcomes to be established earlier in the academic career.

**NOTE: Student names must not be included in data collection. Totals of successful completions, manner of assessment (publications, thesis/dissertation, or qualifying exam) may be presented in table format if they apply to learning outcomes.**

### 3. What Was Learned

Based on the analysis of the data, and compared to the threshold values provided, what was learned from the assessment?

a) Areas of strength

b) Areas that need improvement

### 4. How We Responded

a) Describe how “What Was Learned” was communicated to the department, or program faculty.

b) Based on the faculty responses, will there be any curricular or assessment changes?  Y  N

\_\_\_\_\_

c) If Yes, what changes will be implemented (choose all that apply and describe specifically below under d))

Gather additional data to verify or refute the result \_\_\_\_\_

Areas where the acceptable performance threshold has not been met are highlighted. \_\_\_\_\_

Change the acceptable performance threshold \_\_\_\_\_

Evaluate the rubric to assure outcomes meet student skill level \_\_\_\_\_

Identify potential curriculum changes to try to address the problem \_\_\_\_\_

Use Bloom’s Taxonomy to consider stronger learning outcomes \_\_\_\_\_

Choose a different assignment to assess the outcome \_\_\_\_\_

Other (please describe): \_\_\_\_\_

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d) Please include which outcome is targeted, and how changes will be measured for improvement. If other criteria is used to recommend program changes

**(such as exit surveys, or employer satisfaction surveys) please explain how the responses are driving department, or program decisions.**

**e) When will the changes be next assessed?**

## **5. Closing the Loop**

**a) Based on assessment from previous years, please describe program level changes that have led to outcome improvements.**

**NOTE: Student names must not be included in data collection. Dialog on successful completions, manner of assessment (publications, thesis/dissertation, or qualifying exam) may be presented in table format if they apply to learning outcomes. In programs where numbers are very small and individual identification can be made, focus should be on programmatic improvements rather than student success. Data should be collected through the year on an annual basis.**

Submit report to [programassessment@montana.edu](mailto:programassessment@montana.edu)

**Assessment Plan – Year 0 Report**

College:

Year 0 Assessment Plan Report is due September 15<sup>th</sup>.

Department:

Submitted by:

Indicate all majors, minors, certificates and/or options that are included in this new assessment Plan

Majors/Minors/Certificate	Options

**Part 1: Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):** PLOs should be written as specific, measurable statements describing what students will be able to do upon completion of the program. The assessment of PLOs provide feedback on the expected knowledge, skills, and attitudes that students develop as they progress through their program.

**List the program learning outcomes:**

PLO#	PLO Description
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

(Ideally, program will have no more than 5 PLO's, if you have more than 7 you can expand the table, but consider the consolidation of outcomes)

**Part 2: Development of Assessment Plan**

**Each plan will require the following information:**

Threshold Values: Along with PLOs, plans should include threshold values; minimums against which to assess student achievement for learning outcomes. Threshold values are defined as an established criteria for which outcome achievement is defined as met or not met.

Methods of Assessment & Data Source: Assessment plans require evidence to demonstrate student learning at the program level. This evidence can be in the form of a direct or indirect measure of student learning. Both direct and indirect assessment data must be associated with the program's learning outcomes. An assessment rubric will also need to be included that demonstrates how

evaluation of the data was used to assess student achievement.

Timeframe for Collecting and Analyzing Data: Develop a multi-year assessment schedule that will show when all program learning outcomes will be assessed. As graduate assessment reports are biennial, faculty review of assessment results may only occur every other year, however, annual faculty meeting to review these data and discuss student progress may be beneficial.

## 2a. Curriculum Map

ASSESSMENT PLANNING CHART						
Program Learning Outcomes	Course Alignments: Include rubric, number and course title	Identification of Assessment Artifact				
ASSESSMENT SCHEDULE						
PLO	Course	Year to be assessed				
		2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025

**Part 3: Program Assessment:** The assessment plan will need to include: 1. how assessment will be conducted; 2. who receives the analyzed assessment data, and 3. how it will be used by program faculty for program improvement(s).

- 1) How will assessment artifacts be identified?
- 2) How will they be collected (and by whom)?

3) Who will be assessing the artifacts?

#### Part 4: Program Assessment Plan:

All plans must include assessment rubrics (the methodology of how student artifacts are to be assessed, and a threshold for student success attainment. **(The chart below is an example of the information requested...you can configure your rubrics in different ways)**

<b>PLO #1 Example: Demonstrate a substantive breadth of knowledge in the field of study.</b>					<b>Threshold Values</b>
Indicators	Level 1	Level2	Level 3	Level 4	
Analysis of Information, Ideas, or Concepts	Identifies problem types	Focuses on difficult problems with persistence	Understands complexity of a problem	Provides logical interpretations of data	80% of students will meet or exceed Level 3 competency
Application of Information, Ideas, or Concepts	Uses standard solution methods	Provides a logical interpretation of the data	Employs creativity in search of a solution	Achieves clear, unambiguous conclusions from the data	
Synthesis	Identifies intermediate steps required that connects previous material	Recognizes and values alternative problem solving methods	Connects ideas or develops solutions in a clear coherent order	Develops multiple solutions, positions, or perspectives	
Evaluation	Check the solutions against the issue	Identifies what the final solution should determine	Recognizes hidden assumptions and implied premises	Evaluates premises, relevance to a conclusion and adequacy of support for conclusion.	

**(Examples provided should be deleted before submission, add additional rows for all PLO's)**



**Part 5: Program Assessment Plan:**

1) How will annual assessment be communicated to faculty within the department? How will faculty participating in the collecting of assessment data (student work/artifacts) be notified?

2) When will the data be collected and reviewed, and by whom?

3) Who will be responsible for the writing of the report?

4) How, when, and by whom, will the report be shared?

5) How will past assessments be used to inform changes and improvements? (How will Closing the Loop be documented)?

6) Other Comments:

Submit report to [programassessment@montana.edu](mailto:programassessment@montana.edu)

**The link to the Qualtrics rubric for reviewing Assessment Reports is here:**

[AOC APR Rubric 2020-21](#)

Below is the text of the survey for your information.

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**AOC APR Rubric 20-21**

**1. Program Identification (you will select the College, Department and Program of the report)**

**2. Program Learning Outcomes**

Student learning outcomes identify the intended knowledge, understandings, or abilities that students will acquire through the academic program. The majority of these outcomes are at a high cognitive level.

- **Outstanding** - Outcomes are stated with clarity and specificity including precise verbs and rich descriptions of the content/skill/or attitudinal domain. (5)
- **Excellent** - Outcomes generally contain precise verbs and rich description of the content/skill/or attitudinal domain. (4)
- **Achieving** - Outcomes are present, but with imprecise verbs (e.g. know, understand), vague description of content/skill/or attitudinal domain. (3)
- **Needs Development** - Outcomes are included that describe course level evaluation. No program level outcomes are included that explicitly describe what students know, understand, or are able to do. (2)
- **Inadequate** - Outcomes are absent. Program learning outcomes section describes program goals and objectives rather than student learning outcomes. (1)

**3. Assessment Plan, Schedule and Data Source**

Please indicate if the following elements were included in the report:

	Yes	No	Unclear
Multi-year Assessment Schedule			
Data sources for Program Learning Outcomes			
Threshold Values			
A Rubric for scoring is included			
Was the completed assessment consistent with the plan? (indicate response on the report)			

Explain any "unclear" responses from previous question

\_\_\_\_\_

#### 4. What Was Done and How Data Were Collected Sections (Assessment Plan )

The report describes the methodology about data collection and analysis.

- **Outstanding** - The data collection process is clearly explained and is appropriate to the specification of desired results (e.g. representative sampling, two or more trained raters for performance assessment). Measures are appropriate as evidenced by tools (i.e. rubrics) that clearly align with learning outcomes. (5)
- **Excellent** - Enough information is provided to understand the data collection process, such as a description of the sample, testing protocol, and rater review. However, there is insufficient information in some aspects of the data collection and analysis. (4)
- **Achieving** - At a superficial level, it appears that content assessed by the measures matches the outcomes, but no explanation is provided (3)
- **Needs Development** - Limited information is provided about data collection such as who and how many took the assessment, but not enough to properly evaluate the process. (2)
- **Inadequate** - A discussion of assessment measures and plan is absent or vague. (1)

#### 5. What was learned (Assessment Findings)

Findings describe what was learned from the assessment measures. Comparisons are made to threshold values (if they are present). Thoughtful interpretation is made to define Areas of Strength and Areas that Need Improvement based on analysis of data.

- **Outstanding** - Results are present, and they directly relate to data collected. Interpretations of results seem to be reasonable given the outcomes, desired results of outcomes, and methodology. (5)
- **Excellent** - Results are present, and they directly relate to the outcomes and desired results for outcomes, but presentation is difficult to follow. Interpretations of results seem to be reasonable inferences given outcomes, desired results of outcomes, and methodology. (4)
- **Achieving** - Results are present, but it is unclear how they relate to the outcomes or desired result from for the outcome. Interpretation attempted but the interpretation does not refer back to the outcomes or desired results of outcomes. Or the interpretations are clearly not supported by the methodology and/or results. (3)
- **Needs Development** - Findings from assessment measures are summarized and clearly reported by outcome. However, there is no interpretation of results. (2)
- **Inadequate** - No findings from assessment measures are reported. (1)

#### 6. How We Responded - Sharing Results with Faculty

Results were communicated to the department, or program faculty, with a forum for faculty feedback and recommendations.

- **Outstanding** - Information provided to all faculty in a forum that allowed for discussion of results. Mode and details of communication clear. In addition, information shared with others such as advisory committees and other stakeholders, as appropriate. (5)
- **Excellent** - Information provided to all faculty that allowed for discussion of results. Mode and details of communication clear. (4)
- **Achieving** - Information provided to all faculty but no evidence of discussion. (3)
- **Needs Development** - Information provided to a limited number of faculty or communication process unclear. (2)
- **Inadequate** - No evidence of communication (1)

## 7. How we responded

Based on the faculty responses, will there be any curricular or assessment changes (such as plans for measurable improvements or realignment or learning outcomes)? *Please indicate the response on the report*

- Yes
- No

## 8. How We Responded - Changes in Response to Findings

The findings are used to inform annual action plans to improve the program. Assessment findings are appropriately used as information that drives improvement in learning, instruction, curriculum or strategic planning.

- **Outstanding** - Learning Outcome(s) for change is identified and changes are described and justified based on the findings, or no changes are warranted based on the findings so far. Action plan for assessing this change is included. (5)
- **Excellent** - Changes are described and justified based on the findings, or no changes are warranted based on the findings so far. Action plan is present, but not specific (4)
- **Achieving** - Changes are described and justified based on the findings, or no changes are warranted based on the findings so far. (3)
- **Needs Development** - Changes, in the form of action plans, are described but not justified by findings or linked to learning outcomes. (2)
- **Inadequate** - No action plans based on findings are reported. (1)

## 9. Closing the Loop

Based on assessment from previous years, program level changes that have led to program improvements have been implemented and are described.

- **Outstanding** - Strong evidence, from direct measures, supporting learning improvements due to program modifications. This program responded to previous assessment results, made curricular and/or pedagogical modifications., re-assessed, and found that student learning improved. (5)
- **Excellent** - Evidence, from direct measures, suggesting learning improvements due to program modifications. This program responded to previous assessment results, made curricular, and/or pedagogical modifications, re-assessed and found that student learning improved. (4)
- **Achieving** - Examples of improvements (or plans to improve) documented and directly related to findings of assessment. Improvements lack specificity. (3)
- **Needs Development** - Examples of improvements documented but the link between them and the assessment findings is not clear. (2)
- **Inadequate** - No mention of any improvements based on past assessments. (1)

## 10. Commendations:

## 11. Recommendations:



**Office of Academic Affairs  
Evaluation of Assessment Report**

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**Program (s):**

**Academic Year Assessed:** 2020-21

**Date Reviewed:** December 2021

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The Assessment Report submitted in Fall 2021 for the degree programs listed above was evaluated by members of the University Assessment and Outcomes Committee. Commendations and Recommendations are below as well as ratings on each of the report criteria. See pages 3 and 4 for detailed explanations of each criteria. Questions can be directed to Assistant Provost Martha Peters at [mpeters@montana.edu](mailto:mpeters@montana.edu).

**Commendations:**

**Recommendations:**

**Specific Item Ratings and Feedback:**

Program Report Element	Rating
<p><b>Program Learning Outcomes</b> - Student learning outcomes identify the intended knowledge, understandings, or abilities that students will acquire through the academic program. The majority of these outcomes are at a high cognitive level.</p>	<p>Outstanding            Excellent            Achieving            Needs Development            Inadequate</p>
<p><b>What Was Done and How Data Were Collected Sections (Assessment Plan )</b> - The report describes the methodology about data collection and analysis.</p>	<p>Outstanding            Excellent            Achieving            Needs Development            Inadequate</p>
<p><b>What was learned (Assessment Findings)</b> -Findings describe what was learned from the assessment measures. Comparisons are made to threshold values (if they are present). Thoughtful interpretation is made to define Areas of Strength and Areas that Need Improvement based on analysis of data.</p>	<p>Outstanding            Excellent            Achieving            Needs Development            Inadequate</p>
<p><b>How We Responded - Sharing Results with Faculty</b> - Results were communicated to the department, or program faculty, with a forum for faculty feedback and recommendations.</p>	<p>Outstanding            Excellent            Achieving            Needs Development            Inadequate</p>
<p><b>How We Responded - Changes in Response to Findings</b> -The findings are used to inform annual action plans to improve the program. Assessment findings are appropriately used as information that drives improvement in learning, instruction, curriculum or strategic planning.</p>	<p>Outstanding            Excellent            Achieving            Needs Development            Inadequate</p>
<p><b>Closing the Loop</b> - Based on assessment from previous years, program level changes that have led to program improvements have been implemented and are described.</p>	<p>Outstanding            Excellent            Achieving            Needs Development            Inadequate</p>

## Rubric for Program Assessment Report Elements

	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Achieving</b>	<b>Needs Development</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
<b>Program Learning Outcomes</b> - Student learning outcomes identify the intended knowledge, understandings, or abilities that students will acquire through the academic program. The majority of these outcomes are at a high cognitive level.	Outcomes are stated with clarity and specificity including precise verbs and rich descriptions of the content/skill/or attitudinal domain.	Outcomes generally contain precise verbs and rich description of the content/skill/or attitudinal domain.	Outcomes are present, but with imprecise verbs (e.g. know, understand), vague description of content/skill/or attitudinal domain.	Outcomes are included that describe course level evaluation. No program level outcomes are included that explicitly describe what students know, understand, or are able to do.	Outcomes are absent. Program learning outcomes section describes program goals and objectives rather than student learning outcomes.
<b>What Was Done and How Data Were Collected Sections (Assessment Plan )</b> - The report describes the methodology about data collection and analysis.	The data collection process is clearly explained and is appropriate to the specification of desired results (e.g. representative sampling, two or more trained raters for performance assessment). Measures are appropriate as evidenced by tools (i.e. rubrics) that clearly align with learning outcomes.	Enough information is provided to understand the data collection process, such as a description of the sample, testing protocol, and rater review. However, there is insufficient information in some aspects of the data collection and analysis.	At a superficial level, it appears that content assessed by the measures matches the outcomes, but no explanation is provided	Limited information is provided about data collection such as who and how many took the assessment, but not enough to properly evaluate the process.	A discussion of assessment measures and plan is absent or vague.
<b>What was learned (Assessment Findings)</b> - Findings describe what was learned from the assessment measures. Comparisons are made to threshold values (if they are present). Thoughtful interpretation is made to define Areas of Strength and Areas that Need Improvement based on analysis of data.	Results are present, and they directly relate to data collected. Interpretations of results seem to be reasonable given the outcomes, desired results of outcomes, and methodology.	Results are present, and they directly relate to the outcomes and desired results for outcomes, but presentation is difficult to follow. Interpretations of results seem to be reasonable inferences given outcomes, desired results of outcomes, and methodology.	Results are present, but it is unclear how they relate to the outcomes or desired result from for the outcome. Interpretation attempted but the interpretation does not refer back to the outcomes or desired results of outcomes. Or the interpretations are clearly not supported by the methodology and/or results.	Findings from assessment measures are summarized and clearly reported by outcome. However, there is no interpretation of results.	No findings from assessment measures are reported.

## Rubric for Program Assessment Report Elements (cont.)

	Outstanding	Excellent	Achieving	Needs Development	Inadequate
<p><b>How We Responded - Sharing Results with Faculty</b> - Results were communicated to the department, or program faculty, with a forum for faculty feedback and recommendations.</p>	Information provided to all faculty in a forum that allowed for discussion of results. Mode and details of communication clear. In addition, information shared with others such as advisory committees and other stakeholders, as appropriate.	Information provided to all faculty that allowed for discussion of results. Mode and details of communication clear.	Information provided to all faculty but no evidence of discussion.	Information provided to a limited number of faculty or communication process unclear.	No evidence of communication
<p><b>How We Responded - Changes in Response to Findings</b> -The findings are used to inform annual action plans to improve the program. Assessment findings are appropriately used as information that drives improvement in learning, instruction, curriculum or strategic planning.</p>	Learning Outcome(s) for change is identified and changes are described and justified based on the findings, or no changes are warranted based on the findings so far. Action plan for assessing this change is included.	Changes are described and justified based on the findings, or no changes are warranted based on the findings so far. Action plan is present, but not specific	Changes are described and justified based on the findings, or no changes are warranted based on the findings so far.	Changes, in the form of action plans, are described but not justified by findings or linked to learning outcomes.	No action plans based on findings are reported.
<p><b>Closing the Loop</b> - Based on assessment from previous years, program level changes that have led to program improvements have been implemented and are described.</p>	Strong evidence, from direct measures, supporting learning improvements due to program modifications. This program responded to previous assessment results, made curricular and/or pedagogical modifications., re-assessed, and found that student learning improved.	Evidence, from direct measures, suggesting learning improvements due to program modifications. This program responded to previous assessment results, made curricular, and/or pedagogical modifications, re-assessed and found that student learning improved.	Examples of improvements (or plans to improve) documented and directly related to findings of assessment. Improvements lack specificity.	Examples of improvements documented but the link between them and the assessment findings is not clear.	No mention of any improvements based on past assessments.