**Undergraduate Assessment Committee Institutional Summary Report**

*Review of Undergraduate Program Assessment Reports*

2014-2015

**Common themes from program reports**

***Strengths:***

* 1. Many programs use external tools, like discipline-specific exams or standards, to augment their assessment of student learning and compare Manchester student results to national benchmarks.
	2. Graduates from multiple programs indicate strong preparation from their program and success in employment/further education after graduation.
	3. Several programs are actively revising and enhancing their assessment practices.
		1. Many programs showed evidence of having used information and resources gained from the fall faculty workshop to improve assessment.
		2. Many programs have developed curriculum maps, though some would still benefit from doing so.
	4. Experiential learning is being used by a number of programs to enhance overall learning through internships, volunteer work and class projects.
	5. Many programs provide significant service to the Core curriculum, offering multiple Core classes.

***Challenges:***

1. The majority of programs would benefit from reviewing and revising program learning outcomes to ensure they reflect what graduates of the program will know and be able to do, and to ensure outcomes are measurable.
2. Several programs would benefit from more clearly aligning the requirements of the SCE with learning outcomes.
	1. Developing SCE evaluation rubrics based on program learning outcomes would be a mechanism to help achieve this.
	2. It would also be useful to employ a performance range for each learning outcome measured on the SCE in order to identify areas of strength and weakness (rather than overall pass/low pass results).
3. Several programs would benefit from identifying common assignments or learning artifacts to use, in addition to the SCE, for assessing student work in relation to learning outcomes. Note, many programs already do this and only need to add their analyses from these assessments to their annual assessment reports.
4. It would be useful for programs to create a curriculum map in order to show the alignment between learning outcomes, courses and assessments (SCE and others) and to track learning outcomes across a set of courses.
5. Programs with few students in the major experience challenges reporting meaningful statistics on student learning and may need additional support developing and implementing more qualitative measures. Some recommendations for assessing small majors include:
	1. Using common assignments (to measure a specific learning outcome) in larger, lower-level classes
	2. Using qualitative research methods to gain feedback about the program

**Assessment procedural observations**

1. The new organizational structure may necessitate rethinking how assessment is done in some programs (for example, considering implications for assessing majors within colleges/departments together or separately).
2. The fall faculty workshop was effective at helping programs understand what assessment really entails, but faculty buy-in is still a challenge in some programs. As the assessment committee refines the process, the goal is to make it as streamlined and transparent as possible.
3. Some programs are not completing the assessment reports on time (in some cases, several months late), even though it is suspected that this does not reflect a lack of assessment in those programs, but rather a lack of making that assessment explicit in a timely manner. Nevertheless, this presents logistical problems for the assessment committee and makes it difficult for programs to take action based on assessment findings.
4. Not all programs list their mission, goals and learning outcomes on their websites.

**Budget/Resource findings**

Common themes from reports include requests for:

1. Faculty professional development
2. Student professional development (e.g. funds for students to attend/present at conferences)
3. Faculty-line needs

***Please review individual program feedback reports for program-specific resource needs.***

**Recommendations**

1. College-level meetings with assessment committee representatives to discuss revision of learning outcomes
2. Faculty professional development session on assessment terminology and alignment of courses, assignments and SCE with learning outcomes
3. Update all program websites to ensure program mission, goals and learning outcomes are listed

**Additional Resources**

Glossary of assessment terms

Article regarding language for learning outcomes

Curriculum map resources