Northern Illinois University

Accreditation, Assessment and Evaluation

**Annual Assessment Update Report**

**AY 2022 & AY 2023**

**Purpose and Overview**

The Annual Assessment Update process supports NIU's Academic Program Review. Its purpose is to establish an on-going process by which degree programs can demonstrate the achievement of student learning outcomes and foster continuous program improvement. The Annual Assessment Update (AAU) process was implemented voluntarily by the university community in academic year 2002-2003 and has been a mandated practice since AY 2004-2005. Prior to the pandemic pause, every academic degree program was required to submit an Annual Assessment Update Report in spring of each academic year summarizing assessment results for at least two student learning outcomes (prior to 2018-2019 the results from two assessment methods) that had been targeted that year. Degree programs were encouraged to assess each student learning outcome every few years during the program review cycle and thereby build a database that documents the achievement of all program student learning outcomes.

In spring 2022, the Annual Assessment Update template was updated in response to recommendations of the Assessment Review Task Force. The template was converted to an electronic format (Qualtrics) and was made more flexible and responsive to program needs and preferences while still covering each aspect of the assessment cycle (program student learning outcomes, assessment methods, data collection and analysis, use of data for continuous improvement, and closing the loop). Questions on the current AAU reporting template ask programs to address the following:

- Changes made during past year and whether there is evidence of their impact [closing the loop]
- Which SLOs were addressed and what information was collected [program student learning outcomes]
- Summary of program's review and discussion of the data and conclusions drawn as a result [data collection and analysis]
- Future improvements considered based on these conclusions, along with a timeline for planned action [use of data for continuous improvement]

Each year, Accreditation, Assessment, and Evaluation (AAE) staff review each program's Annual Assessment Update Report using a rubric included with the reporting template and instructions to provide feedback to each degree program. Prior to 2013-2014, feedback focused primarily on documenting compliance with the process and, to a lesser extent, to providing suggestions that could improve the quality of the program's assessment system.

Between 2013-2014 and the pandemic reporting pause, the focus of the feedback shifted toward a greater emphasis on strengthening the program's assessment system to provide useful data/information to inform continuous program improvement and the program's use of the data for this purpose. AAE provided feedback tailored to each academic program with regard to student learning outcomes, assessment methods, reporting of results, and the use of results.

Prior to 2014-2015, performance levels consisted of an indication of whether key criteria were present or absent. In 2014-2015, performance levels changed to a three-point scale measuring the extent to which reports demonstrate key criteria (not at all, partially, or completely). The University Assessment Panel's (UAP's) target was that all reports meet (i.e., completely) criteria in each of the four areas.

In spring 2022, the Annual Assessment Update feedback process was updated in response to recommendations of the Assessment Review Task Force. Feedback began to focus primarily on the program's reported use of the assessment system/data for continuous improvement and focused suggestions for improving the program's ability to use data for continuous improvement. Therefore, only the last section of the previous AAU feedback rubric (the section labeled Decisions, Actions, and Use of

Results) and the general comments section were included in the feedback rubric used in 2021-2022 and 2022-2023. In addition, an effort was made to minimize the use of assessment jargon and instead focus on clear and straightforward language.

**Recommendations**

Accreditation, Assessment and Evaluation will prioritize hosting an orientation to AAUs for the College of Visual and Performing Arts and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences due to their lower participation rates and the failure of a significant number of programs to show evidence of a fully implemented assessment system on an annual basis.

**Overall Participation**

The university-wide submission rate of Annual Assessment Updates was 93% before the pandemic. After a two-year pause during the COVID-19 pandemic, submission levels were just 69% in 2022 and 81% in 2023. Participations are moving in a positive direction, with another ten percentage points before it is back at pre-pandemic levels.

| Academic Year | Total Programs Expected to Submit | Number of Submissions | Exemptions* | Participation Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2018-2019 | 140 | 130 | NA | 93% |
| 2019-2020 | *Reporting pause* | *NA* | *NA* | NA |
| 2020-2021 | *Reporting pause* | *NA* | *NA* | NA |
| NEW TEMPLATE 2021-2022 | 155 | 107 | 10 | 69% |
| 2022-2023 | 111 | 90 | 25 | 81% |

*In 2018-2019, 8 College of Education programs participating in a pilot assessment reporting program were not included. Beginning in 2020-2021, ten College of Education licensure programs were exempted due to an agreement to use their annual reports to the University Office of Educator Licensure in lieu of AAU reporting. In 2022-2023, 25 programs were granted exemptions due to doing accreditation self-studies or mid-status assessment reports that year.*

**College Level Detail**

Colleges varied widely in terms of AAU submission rates with the College of Visual and Performing Arts (17%) and the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology (31%) having a third or fewer of their programs submitting reports in 2022. The College of Business (69%) and College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (87.5%) did a little better, with most programs submitting reports. The remaining colleges posted 100% submission rates.

In 2023, AAU submission rates with the College of Visual and Performing Arts (12.5%) was the only college with fewer than half of programs submitting reports. The College of Business (60%) had slightly more than half of programs submit AAUs, down from 69% the previous year. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (88%) held steady with most programs submitting reports. The remaining colleges had submission rates of 100% (except Law, which was exempt due to their ABA self-study occurring that year).

Each AAU report submitted was scored on five criteria related to Decisions, Actions, and the Use of Results (section from pre-2020 AAU rubric, used in the current rubric). Scores indicated for each criteria indicated whether the report provided evince that each was met "to a great extent," "somewhat," or "not at all." The scoring criteria were the following:

1. Conclusions relative to student learning outcomes are clearly supported by the data

2. Program improvement actions are identified/planned

3. Improvement actions have been implemented

4. Assessment of improvement actions are planned (i.e., to assure the loop will be closed)

5. Improvement actions have been assessed (i.e., assuring the loop has been closed)

Narrative comments were also provided, both in cases were criteria scores were given and in cases where none of the criteria could be scored given what was provided in the report.

### College of Business

Over the past two years, most programs met criteria 1 (data clearly supported conclusions) and some met criteria 2 (program improvement actions identified/planned). Two of the reports submitted were from programs with recently implemented assessment plans that had not yet yielded sufficient data. Programs in this college did not provide clear evidence of implemented improvement actions, planned assessment of improvement actions, or improvement actions that have been assessed for impact. If these parts (criteria 3-5) of the assessment cycle have in fact been addressed in practice, this was not clearly evident from the reports. **Four programs were flagged for failure to show evidence of a fully implemented assessment system due to failing to submit AAUs for two consecutive years.**

| College of Business | Total Programs Expected to Submit | Number of Submissions | Exemptions* | Participation Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 13 | 9 | 0 | 69% |
| 2023 | 10 | 6 | 3 | 60% |

## College of Education

In 2022, all programs showed evidence of meeting at least one criteria and many programs met multiple criteria. Five out of the twenty programs showed evidence of meeting all or nearly all (4 or 5) of the criteria. No non-exempt programs failed to submit reports in 2022; two non-exempted programs failed to submit reports in 2023. **No programs were flagged for failing to provide evidence of a full-implemented assessment system.**

| College of Education | Total Programs Expected to Submit | Number of Submissions | Exemptions* | Participation Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 22 | 22 | 0 | 100% |
| 2023 | 4 | 4 | 24 | 100% |

## College of Engineering and Engineering Technology

Most programs did not submit reports during the year the college was writing its self-study for accreditation in 2022. However, the one that did (Engineering Technology, B.S., showed evidence for all five criteria. In 2023, all programs submitted reports. Five of the thirteen programs met both criteria 1 and criteria two. Other programs seemed to have more general plans to improve or are too new/do not yet have enough data to draw any conclusions about the need for improvement. **No programs were flagged for failing to provide evidence of a full-implemented assessment system.**

| College of Engineering and Engineering Technology | Total Programs Expected to Submit | Number of Submissions | Exemptions* | Participation Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 13 | 4 | 0 | 31% |
| 2023 | 15 | 15 | 0 | 100% |

## College of Health and Human Sciences

All programs from this college submitted reports for both years. In 2022, some programs provided evidence for meeting one or multiple criteria, most programs met multiple criteria in 2023. Overall, the programs in this college presented strong evidence of continuous improvement using their assessment system. **No programs were flagged for failing to provide evidence of a full-implemented assessment system.**

| College Health and Human Sciences | Total Programs Expected to Submit | Number of Submissions | Exemptions* | Participation Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 20 | 20 | 0 | 100% |
| 2023 | 20 | 20 | 0 | 100% |

*College of Law*

In Spring 2022, the College of Law was working hard on finalizing and beginning to implement its assessment system in preparation for its mid-cycle report in 2023-2023 and its accreditation visit in Fall 2023. In Spring 2023, they were given an exemption from the annual report in order to focus on their accreditation self-study report, which includes program assessment. **This program was not flagged for failing to provide evidence of a fully-implemented assessment system.**

| College of Law | Total Programs Expected to Submit | Number of Submissions | Exemptions* | Participation Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 100% |
| 2023 | 1 | 0 | 1 | NA |

*College of Liberal Arts and Sciences*

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences has the largest number of programs and wide variation in how many, if any, criteria were in evidence in the reports. **Four programs were flagged for failure to show evidence of a fully implemented assessment system due to failing to submit AAUs for two consecutive years. Another program was flagged for not providing direct evidence related to learning outcomes for two consecutive years.**

| College of Liberal Arts and Sciences | Total Programs Expected to Submit | Number of Submissions | Exemptions* | Participation Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 56 | 49 | 0 | 87.5% |
| 2023 | 51 | 45 | 8 | 88% |

*College of Visual and Performing Arts*

Most programs from the College of Visual and Performing Arts did not submit reports in either year. In 2022, two from the School of Theatre and Dance submitted reports but none of the college's sixteen other programs did so. In 2023, two programs from the School of Art and Design submitted reports but none of the colleges sixteen other programs did so. Three of the four reports met multiple criteria while the fourth one met one criteria. **Twelve programs were flagged for failure to show evidence of a fully implemented assessment system due to failing to submit AAUs for two consecutive years.**

| College of Visual and Performing Arts | Total Programs Expected to Submit | Number of Submissions | Exemptions* | Participation Rate |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2022 | 16 | 2 | 0 | 12.5% |
| 2023 | 12 | 2 | 4 | 17% |

**Reporting Template (Qualtrics)**

**2022-2023 Annual Assessment Update (with guiding prompts)**

The purpose of the Annual Assessment Update (AAU) is to ensure that degree programs regularly make use of an effective assessment plan to collect and use data for continuous improvement of student learning. The AAU provides opportunities for reflection and discussion among department faculty about these data/information collected on student learning outcomes during the previous year. The AAU report can also serve as a source of information for other reports such as mid-status assessment reports and accreditation reports.

**Please note:** Save your work before closing the window or navigating to another site. To save your work, use the "Next Page/Save My Work" button at the bottom of the page to navigate to the next page and automatically save your work. Use the back arrow to return to previous pages to edit or continue working on them.

At the end of the survey, you will have an option to download a pdf copy of your completed report for your records.

College

o        College of Business

o        College of Education

o        College of Engineering and Engineering Technology

o        College of Health and Human Sciences

o        College of Law

o        College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

o        College of Visual and Performing Arts

Report completed by

o        Department _____

o        Degree program(s) being reported on _____

o        Name _____

o        Title _____

o        Email _____

**What improvements or enhancements has your program implemented to support student learning over the past year? Did these actions have the desired impact?**
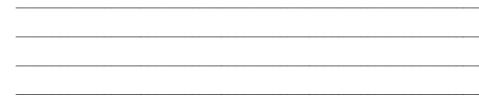
Improvements or enhancements may include any alterations to the program curriculum, instruction, and assessment to monitor and improve student learning.

Impacts may include improvements in performance on relevant assessments or positive student feedback regarding the improvements or enhancements.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

**What student learning outcome(s) (SLOs) did the program address in 2022-2023? (SLOs from the program's assessment plan can found here.) What information about student learning was collected relative to these SLOs?**

Information about student learning may include direct measures of student learning (e.g., course assignments, performances/exhibitions, clinical/field evaluations) and indirect measures of student learning (e.g., survey, interview, or focus group responses).

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

**Please summarize the program's review and discussion of the data collected for each SLO identified (in the previous question)? What are some conclusions the program faculty drew based on this review?**

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

**What future improvements have been considered based on your program's conclusions regarding student learning? Please indicate a timeline for planned actions.**

Improvements or enhancements may include any alterations to the program curriculum (e.g., revising a course, change in course sequence), instruction (e.g., change in modality, teaching learning practices), and assessment practices (e.g., allowing student choice in demonstration of learning).

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Below are boxes to upload up to five (optional) additional materials you wish to submit with your reports (e.g. assessment tools such as rubrics, scoring guides, survey items).

You do NOT need to use any or all of these. However, please be aware that only one document can be submitted per submission box.

Attach first document here (optional)

Only ONE document may be uploaded in this space (if you choose more than one document here, the last one selected will be the one uploaded).

Attach second document here (optional)

Only ONE document may be uploaded in this space (if you choose more than one document here, the last one selected will be the one uploaded).

Attach third document here (optional)

Only ONE document may be uploaded in this space (if you choose more than one document here, the last one selected will be the one uploaded).

Attach fourth document here (optional)

Only ONE document may be uploaded in this space (if you choose more than one document here, the last one selected will be the one uploaded).

Attach fifth document here (optional)

Only ONE document may be uploaded in this space (if you choose more than one document here, the last one selected will be the one uploaded).

Are there any current challenges or concerns about the program's assessment efforts that AAE staff can help you with?

o       Yes (please briefly describe) _____

o       No

**Academic Degree Programs**

**Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes**

**2022-2023 Annual Assessment Update Feedback**

Degree Program: _____   Date: _____

Degree: _____   Reviewer: _____

The purpose of the Annual Assessment Update (AAU) is to ensure that degree programs regularly make use of an effective assessment plan to collect and use data for continuous improvement of student learning. The AAU provides opportunities for reflection and discussion among department faculty about these data/information collected on student learning outcomes during the previous year. The AAU report can also serve as a source of information for other reports such as mid-status assessment reports and accreditation reports.

**General comments, suggestions and recommendations:**

**<u>Decisions, Actions, and the Use of Results</u>**

Degree to which criteria are met.
N = <u>N</u>ot at all, S = <u>S</u>omewhat, and G = <u>G</u>reat extent

| N | S | G | Criteria |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Conclusions relative to student learning outcomes are clearly supported by the data |
| | | | Program improvement actions are identified/planned |
| | | | Improvement actions have been implemented |
| | | | Assessment of improvement actions are planned (i.e., to assure the loop will be closed) |
| | | | Improvement actions have been assessed (i.e., assuring the loop has been closed) |
| | | | |
| Use of Results Observations, comments, and suggestions: | | | |

**Appendix C**

**Programs Granted Exemptions in 2022**

| Program Name | Reason for Exemption |
|---|---|
| **College of Education** ||
| Elementary Education, B.S.Ed. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Literacy Education, M.S.Ed. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Middle Level Teaching and Learning, B.S.Ed. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Teaching, M.A.T. -Specialization, Elementary Education, M.A.T. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Physical Education, B.S.Ed. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Educational Administration, Ed.S. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Educational Administration, M.S.Ed. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| School Business Management, M.S.Ed. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Early Childhood Education, B.S. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Special Education, B.S.Ed. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |

## Appendix D

## Programs Granted Exemptions in 2023

| Program Name | Reason for Exemption |
|---|---|
| **College of Business** ||
| Accountancy, B.S. | Self-study this year |
| Accountancy, M.A.C. | Self-study this year |
| Accounting Science, M.A.S. | Self-study this year |
| Taxation, M.S.T. | Self-study this year |
| **College of Education** ||
| Elementary Education, B.S.Ed. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Literacy Education, M.S.Ed. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Middle Level Teaching and Learning, B.S.Ed. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Teaching, M.A.T. -Specialization, Elementary Education, M.A.T. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Counseling, M.S.Ed. | Mid-cycle accreditation reports due this year |
| Counselor Education and Supervision, Ph.D. | Mid-cycle accreditation reports due this year |
| Higher Education and Student Affairs, M.S.Ed. | Mid-cycle status report this year |
| Higher Education, Ed.D. | Mid-cycle status report this year |
| Educational Research, Evaluation, and Assessment M.S. | Mid-cycle status report this year |
| Instructional Technology, M.S.Ed. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Instructional Technology, Ph.D. | Mid-cycle status report this year |
| Physical Education, B.S.Ed. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Educational Administration, Ed.S. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Educational Administration, M.S.Ed. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, Ed.D. | Mid-cycle status report this year |
| Educational Psychology, M.S.Ed. | Mid-cycle status report this year |
| Educational Psychology, Ph.D. | Mid-cycle status report this year |
| School Business Management, M.S.Ed. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Early Childhood Education, B.S. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Early Childhood Education, M.S.Ed. | Mid-cycle status report this year |
| Special Education, B.S.Ed. | Accreditation-specific annual assessment report |
| Special Education, M.S.Ed. | Mid-cycle status report this year |
| **College of Liberal Arts & Sciences** ||
| Communication Studies, B.A./B.S. | Mid-cycle status report this year |
| Communication Studies, M.A. | Mid-cycle status report this year |
| Journalism, B.A./B.S. | Mid-cycle status report this year |
| Mathematical Sciences, B.S. | Mid-cycle status report this year |
| Mathematical Sciences, Ph.D. | Mid-cycle status report this year |
| Mathematical Sciences, M.S. | Mid-cycle status report this year |

| Program Name | Reason for Exemption |
|---|---|
| **College of Visual & Performing Arts** | |
| Music, B.A. | Self-study this year |
| Music, B.M. | Self-study this year |
| Music, M.M. | Self-study this year |
| Music, P.C. | Self-study this year |