

2014-15 Assessment Report Summary

Objectives for Campus-Wide Assessment

There are several benefits to requiring each department and program to develop and conduct comprehensive assessments. Among those most salient to Siena include:

- Enables each department to better understand the extent the area is achieving its mission
- Helps to promote culture of improvement
- Justifies department resources and costs
- Demonstrates the academic and co-curricular quality of a Siena education to prospective and current students, senior leadership, and potential employers
- Stipulated in the reaccreditation process, the College is building evidence that resources are being allocated and used to enable college level student learning and experiences that are rigorous and extensive

Changes in Submissions for 2015

The Assessment Plan and Report (APR) form was simplified for 2014-15. (see [pp. 7-8](#) of this report). Specifically, the letter designation for the assessment cycle phase was replaced by check boxes. Also, definitions and brief descriptions of each assessment report element are available on the form rather than at the end of the document. Moreover, the information requested on the form has changed little in the past four years enabling the faculty and the Student Learning Assessment Committee (SLAC) to track the progress of student learning results as well as changes and improvement in assessment methodologies.

Additional resources were added to the assessment web page. In addition, a [Quick Assessment Guide](#) was created by SLAC in 2014-15.

Compliance

APRs were submitted for all academic programs (100.0%) with at least five students enrolled. This includes all minors and certificates. This is a subsequent percent increase from 2013-14 and 2012-13 in which only a handful of assessment reports were submitted for minors and certificates. The number of programs that did not submit assessment reports is shown to the right. In 2012-13 and 2013-14, the two majors that did not submit assessment reports were from the School of Liberal Arts (Psychology, Sociology).

Did NOT Submit	Majors	Minors & Certs.
2011-12	7	27
2012-13	2	9
2013-14	2	16
2014-15	0	0

The increase in the number of assessment reports received for minors and certificates in recent years is remarkable despite the fact assessment reports were required for these programs since 2012-13. This may due, in part, to several new initiatives. First, the School Assessment Coordinators concentrated efforts on the assessment of minors in 2013-14 and 2014-15. Second, several workshops were offered in 2014-15 to recalcitrant department heads improving compliance. Third, although feedback to the departments has always been promised, in 2014-15 an assessment report rubric was developed to assure feedback is appropriate and useful. Also, a “guarantee” to report comment by early the next fall semester has recently been instituted.

Observations

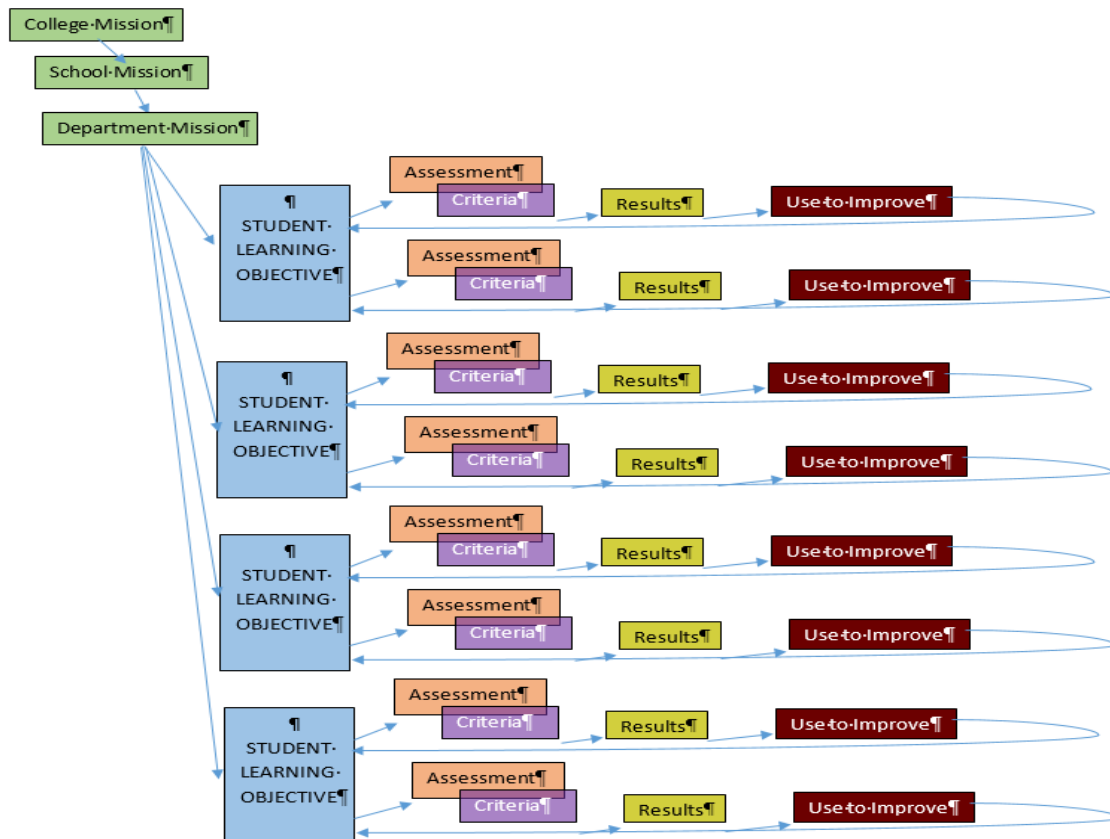
Process

As illustrated below, assessment is a multi-staged process consisting of the following:

1. Defining department or program objectives
2. Developing and conducting assessments that correspond to the objectives
3. Setting criteria that can be discerned to determine if objective met or exceeded

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4. Reporting results that connect the objectives with the assessment
5. Explicitly stating how the results will be used to improve the department or program



Observations about quality and challenges of the 2014-15 assessment reports are discussed within the context of the above process.

Quality

Compared to 2013-14

- All programs now have articulated student learning outcomes and those outcomes focus on student learning.
- There is an increase in student learning outcomes that are explicit, identifying specific content and competencies (e.g. Economics, Computational Science) of the academic programs rather than generalities.
- No department is using satisfaction surveys exclusively to measure student learning.
- Interpretation and use of assessment results are much more prevalent and aligned with the student-learning objective.
- Portfolios and capstone projects are being cited more frequently as areas in which program assessment occurs.
- More departments are reporting that assessments are being used to revise course content, pedagogy, and assignments.
- Criteria for meeting the learning objective are more focused on student learning. In fact, several departments have increased the criteria for particular learning outcomes.
- The phases of the assessment cycle are much better understood. As a result, assessment planning and implementation is much more deliberate, reflective, and meaningful.

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Areas for Improvement

- **Assessment Cycle**
 - Some programs especially minors are still in the planning phase.
 - Very few departments are able to document if changes made because of assessment were helpful.
 - Furthermore, there is still some confusion between reporting changes and if the changes made a difference.
- **Criteria**
 - One of the challenges articulated by the School Assessment Coordinators is the alignment between the criteria and reported assessment results.
 - Learning outcomes, expectations, and assessments for some minors are the same as the major. However, the number of majors that have the same learning outcomes as the minor is decreasing.
- **School and College Goals**
 - With the exception of the *School of Business*, no school has mapped the program learning objectives to school learning goals. However, the School of Liberal Arts has begun that process.
 - Few departments articulate the Siena College Goals (see [p. 6](#) of this report) as learning outcomes.
- **Other**
 - Few centers/institutes submitted assessment reports although their primary mission is the education of students and the Siena community.

Recognitions (in order of the “Process”)

- *Actuarial Science* cites how changes in the program based on assessment has worked and not worked.
- The final project in the *Creative Arts* capstone has evolved to be the pinnacle of the student’s learning experience.
- Multiple assessments are used for each learning objective in *the Environmental Studies* and *Environmental Science* majors.
- Results for *Finance majors* are reported at an appropriate level of detail to help guide future direction for the program.
- *History* tracks progress from previous years to determine if student learning is improving
- Criteria for all *Religious Studies* learning objectives are clear and specific. As a result, assessment information has been used to review the program and make changes that have proved to be productive.
- Via the assessment reporting process, the *School of Liberal Arts* is revisiting its learning goals.

Next Steps

- Continue to work with departments to improve their assessments and to make progress on existing methodology.
- Meet with department heads to listen to concerns and suggestions for support.
- Provide **incentives** to departments that set targets/criteria that challenge the status-quo.
- Emphasize the merits of conducting assessment and submitting an assessment report.
- As mentioned, few programs or departments address the **Siena College Goals** and program goals are not mapped to school goals. Mapping school goals to program goals will be a

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primary undertaking in 2015-16. A request to the VPAA for the faculty examine the utility of the College Goals will also be made.

Additional Resources for Assessment and Submission:

- [2014-15 Assessment Workshops PPTs](#)
- [Assessment Handbook](#)
- [How to Submit Assessment Documentation](#)
- [Resources from Other Colleges web page](#)
- *Academic Assessment Report* example
 - [School of Business](#)
 - [School of Liberal Arts](#)
 - [School of Science](#)

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Mission, Core, and College Learning Goals

Mission

Siena College is a learning community advancing the ideals of a liberal arts education, rooted in its identity as a Franciscan and Catholic institution.

Mission: Learning Community, As a learning community, Siena is committed to a student-centered education emphasizing dynamic faculty-student interaction. Through a blending of liberal arts and professional education, Siena College provides experiences and courses of study instilling the values and knowledge to lead a compassionate, reflective, and productive life of service and leadership.

Mission: Liberal Arts, As a liberal arts college, Siena fosters the rigorous intellectual development of its students through a healthy exchange of ideas both inside and outside the classroom. It provides opportunities to develop critical and creative thinking; to make reasoned and informed judgments; to appreciate cultural diversity; to deepen aesthetic sensibility and to enhance written and oral communication skills. It develops in each individual an appreciation for the richness of exploring knowledge from a variety of perspectives and disciplines.

Mission: Franciscan Community, As a Franciscan community, Siena strives to embody the vision and values of St. Francis of Assisi: faith in a personal and provident God, reverence for all creation, affirmation of the unique worth of each person, delight in diversity, appreciation for beauty, service with the poor and marginalized, a community where members work together in friendship and respect, and commitment to building a world that is more just, peaceable, and humane.

Mission: Catholic College, As a Catholic college, Siena seeks to advance not only the intellectual growth of its students, but their spiritual, religious and ethical formation as well. To this end, Siena is composed of and in dialogue with people from different religious and cultural traditions; fosters a critical appreciation of the Catholic intellectual heritage in conversation with contemporary experience; provides ample opportunities for worship and service; explores the moral dimensions of decision-making in business and the professions; and affirms the dignity of the individual while pursuing the common good.

College Core Learning Goals

As a learning community and liberal arts college grounded in its Franciscan and Catholic heritage, Siena affirms the following learning goals for the core curriculum:

CG 1. Informed reasoning, Students will think critically and creatively to make reasoned and informed judgments. Through engagement with contemporary and enduring questions of human concern, students will solve problems in ways that reflect the integration of knowledge across general and specialized studies, and they will demonstrate competence in information literacy and independent research.

CG2. Effective communication, Students will read texts with comprehension and critical involvement, write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences, speak knowledgeably, and listen with discernment and empathy.

CG 3. Reflection for on Franciscan Concerns, Students will reflect on concerns central to Siena's Franciscan heritage. By the time they complete the core curriculum, students will have engaged four concerns: Heritage, Diversity, Social Justice, and Nature.

CG 4. Scientific and Quantitative Inquiry, Students will demonstrate an understanding of scientific and quantitative methods of analysis.

Core Franciscan Concerns

The Franciscan Concern component of the core ensures thematic exposure to themes of special importance to the Franciscan Tradition that can be explored from multiple perspectives. Students need to take one course in each of the four Franciscan Concern areas:

CFC 1: Heritage: Traditions and Their Texts, As a tradition born in the 13th Century, the Franciscan Tradition is embedded within Western heritage, and as a living tradition nearly 800 years old, the Franciscan Tradition is constitutive of subsequent Western heritage. The "Heritage" rubric embraces this broad sense of

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tradition. Courses will acquaint students with one or more of the major intellectual, cultural, or religious traditions in this history and the texts, figures, events, or movements associated with them. Courses in this category elucidate how these traditions address fundamental questions of humanistic or religious concern.

CFC 2: Diversity: American & Global Pluralism, The Franciscan concern for diversity flows from its affirmation of each individual as worthy of respect and compassion. Individuality implies plurality of perspective, both on the level of differences among persons and on the level of differences among peoples. Appreciating diversity requires that students have the opportunity to see things from perspectives they do not normally occupy. This includes the examination of diverse intellectual perspectives.

CFC 3: Social Justice: Principles and Practice, The Franciscan Tradition joins with other traditions and movements in placing a premium on social justice. Social justice permeates all levels of human affairs and admits investigation from a variety of perspectives. Broadly speaking, social justice concerns (a) the practical organization of human affairs allowing for maximal human flourishing, (b) the values and principles guiding or that might guide the organization of human affairs, (c) the extent to which such values or principles are practically realized or under-realized. The “Social Justice” rubric welcomes courses that study the theory or practice of justice from social, moral, political, religious, economic, environmental, aesthetic, or technological points of view.

CFC 4: Nature: Scientific & Normative Approaches to the Natural World, The Franciscan Tradition affirms the goodness of nature. As an intellectual tradition, it supports the scientific investigation of nature, and as a spiritual tradition it cultivates deepened appreciation for the entirety of the created world and heightened commitment to the effective stewardship of the Earth and all living things. The “Natural World” rubric welcomes courses which both investigate the natural world from a scientific perspective and also examine the impact and consequences of human involvement in natural systems.

Siena College Learning Goals

As a learning community and liberal arts college grounded in its Franciscan and Catholic heritage, Siena affirms the following learning goals:

Siena 1: Reason

Students will think critically and creatively to make reasoned and informed judgments. Through engagement with contemporary and enduring questions of human concern, students will solve problems in ways that reflect the integration of knowledge across general and specialized studies, and they will demonstrate competence in information literacy and independent research.

Siena 2. Rhetoric

Students will read a variety of texts with comprehension and critical involvement, write effectively for a variety of purposes and audiences, speak knowledgeably, and listen with discernment and empathy.

Siena 3. Reflection

Students will comprehend that learning is a life-long process and that personal growth, marked by concern and care for others, is enhanced by intellectual and spiritual exploration.

Siena 4: Regard

Students will affirm the unity of the human family, uphold the dignity of individuals, and delight in diversity. They will demonstrate intercultural knowledge and respect.

Siena 5: Reverence

Students will demonstrate a reverence for creation. They will develop a worldview that recognizes the benefits of sustaining our natural and social worlds.

Siena 6: Responsibility

Students will commit to building a world that is more just, peaceable, and humane. They will lead through service

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Academic Assessment Report

Program:		Department Head:		Date Submitted: June	
Mission:					
1. Major/Program Student Learning Outcomes <i>Students will be able to...</i>	2. Phase	3. Assessment Procedures	4. Assessment Results	5. Use of Results	6. How did the Use of Results improve Student Learning? (or did it?)
1.	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning (Col 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Doing & Analyzing (Col. 3,4) <input type="checkbox"/> Use of Results (Col. 4, 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Determining if Assessment had an Impact on Student Learning (Col. 6)	<u>Method:</u> (e.g. tests, presentations, research paper) <u>Using a Sample of Students?</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <u>If yes, describe your sample.</u> <u>When does assessment occur?</u> <u>How often does assessment occur?</u> <u>Criteria:</u> (How do you know students are achieving learning outcome?)	 Learning Outcome Met? (based on <u>Criteria</u>) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		
2.	<input type="checkbox"/> Planning (Col 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Doing & Analyzing (Col. 3,4) <input type="checkbox"/> Use of Results (Col. 4, 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Determining if Assessment had an Impact on Student Learning (Col. 6)	<u>Method:</u> (e.g.. tests, presentations, research paper) <u>Using a Sample of Students?</u> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <u>If yes, describe your sample.</u> <u>When does assessment occur?</u> <u>How often does assessment occur?</u> <u>Criteria:</u> (How do you know students are achieving learning outcome?)	 Learning Outcome Met? (based on <u>Criteria</u>) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		

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