Office of Institutional Effectiveness
January 2023

2020-2021 Academic Program Assessment Summary

The academic program assessment process at Siena College is intended to involve continuous collaboration and goal-setting, leading to the improvement of student learning. Specifically, this annual process includes the establishment of student learning outcomes; changes made to assignments, instructional techniques, and the curriculum; as well as measures and metrics of student learning. Student learning is also facilitated by the completion of yearly reports, which provide a means for reflection and planning with respect to the multiple aspects of assessment. These reports also provide accountability to internal stakeholders, such as students, other programs, and administrators, and external stakeholders, such as accrediting bodies.

For the 2020-21 year, each academic major, minor, and certificate program was advised to submit the first four sections of their assessment report (i.e., program SLOs, phases, procedures and criteria, and results) by July 1. Each program then had the opportunity to submit the last two sections (i.e., use of results and determining impact) by October 15. OIE met individually with programs in May, June, and November (School of Business) to assist them in developing their reports.

This Academic Program Assessment Summary report provides the status of the 2020-21 academic program assessment cycle, including:
- Report submission compliance statistics
- Assessment phase (e.g., use of results) statistics
- Qualitative observations of areas of strength and areas for improvement
- Recognition of programs doing commendable assessment work

Report Submission Compliance
A culture of continuous improvement implies the active engagement of all major, minor[1], and certificate programs in reporting. Program faculty, school assessment coordinators, members of the Student Learning Assessment Committee (SLAC), and Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) administrators continue to meet, to form connections, and to hold one another accountable as they pursue this goal. In the 2020-2021 year:

- 95% (n = 35) of majors submitted
- 13% (n = 3) of minors submitted
- 33% (n = 4) of cert. submitted

Compared with the history data, the compliance increased 3% for majors but declined remarkably for minors and certificates (54% and 25% respectively). A potential reason for that is the small enrollment in some of those programs, which makes it difficult to assess. The COVID also has a negative impact on the submission compliance. However, OIE and SLAC continue to meet individually with these programs and to provide support.

Did Not Submit	Majors	Minors & Certificates
2011-2012	7	27

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[1] Since 2020, minors that are in the same field as the major are not required to submit assessment reports.

2012-2013	2	9
2013-2014	2	16
2014-2015	0	0
2015-2016	2	11
2016-2017	3	11
2017-2018	1	7
2018-2019	4	22
2019-2020	3	22
2020-2021	2	29

Assessment Phases

Continuous improvement also involves using results to make changes to programs and to improve student learning. Among those programs that submitted reports, over half of majors (57.1%) reported the use of results in making improvements (i.e., "closing the loop") with a growth of 7.1%. A relatively small proportion of majors (17.1%) reported in the planning stage only, as they were either new programs or revamped their assessment process. For minors, regardless of the declined submission compliance, the proportion of programs that were still in the planning phase went down 10.4%.

- 17.1% (n = 6) majors were still in planning phase as they were relatively new programs or revamped their assessment process
- 25.7% (n = 9) majors reported only assessment results, with no use of results
- 57.1% (n = 20) majors reported **use** of results
- 28.6% (n = 2) minors and certificates were still in planning phase
- 28.6% (n = 2) minors and certificates reported only assessment results, with no use of results
- 42.8% (n = 3) minors and certificates reported **use** of results

Areas of Strength

Looking at the content of academic program assessment reports, reports demonstrated the following areas of strength, which were testaments to the professional development of faculty:

- Department Communication
  - More programs started to have conversation among faculty to discuss assessment design and reflect on assessment results.
  - Assessment data were collected from multiple courses taught by different instructors in some programs that traditionally only involved the courses taught by the report submitters.
- Rubrics Development
  - More programs started to develop specific rubrics or checklists for consistent and reliable measurement.
- Results Presenting
  - Many programs presented results in details and with discussion on how to use the results for continuous improvement.
  - Some programs reported and compared results of different semesters or over multiple years; some program also tracked the performance of students who participated different sessions (e.g., online or in-person).

Areas for Improvement

On the other hand, reports also showed the following areas for improvement:

- Description of Assessment
  - The description of assignments in some reports was still vague making it hard to see the alignment between assessment and learning outcomes.
- Development of Curriculum Mapping
  - More programs were encouraged to use curriculum mapping as a tool to visualize the alignment between learning outcomes, specific courses, and levels of leaning complexity.
- Assessment of Small Programs
  - Some programs with small enrollment struggled to identify the appropriate assessment approach. OIE will continue to help those programs and search for innovative methods.

Commendable Assessment Work

In the 2020-21 assessment cycle, many programs continued submitting well-written reports that recorded the program's work on continuous improvement such as Actuarial Science, Health Studies, Physics, Classics, Social Work, etc. In addition, some programs had made substantial progress and were recognized for commendable assessment work. These programs are:

- Management (School of Business)
  - Learning outcomes were clarified based on the program goals and requirements.
  - Criteria were well described with details of outcomes from different perspectives that could be used as a simple checklist or rubric.
  - Results were thoroughly and critically discussed and course structure (e.g., building greater content around decision making) were revised based upon the assessment results and department conversations.

- Math (School of Science)
  - Strong presentation of outcomes capturing various aspects of math learning; new learning outcomes were added and old outcomes were redefined using action verbs.
  - A robust set of assessment methods was clearly described with details; different types of assessment were used including formative assessment to provide ongoing feedback and creative assessment methods to address issues of remote teaching.
  - Results were presented clearly and discussed deeply for potential changes.

- Political Science (School of Liberal Arts)
  - Rubrics were developed and aligned with learning outcomes.
  - Results were clearly articulated and contrasted with previous years' results, providing evidence for data-driven decisions.
  - Learning content (e.g., more emphasis on literature and content knowledge) would be changed based on thoughtful and critical reflection of the assessment results.
  - Impact of changes were discussed and improvement of student performance were constantly monitored.

Summary

Faculty, staff, and administrators are making progress toward adopting a culture of continuous improvement. The majority of programs are compliant in submitting academic assessment reports. Over half of programs that submitted reports reported using results to improve learning, and a relatively smaller number reported being only in the planning phase. Furthermore, faculty have made marked improvements to department communication, development of rubrics, and presentation of results, with some room for improvement regarding description of assessment and use of curriculum mapping.

2021-2022 Report Submission Dates:
- July 1, 2022 – first four sections: program SLOs, phase, procedures and criteria, results
- October 17, 2022 – last two sections: use of results, determining impact

Student Learning Assessment Committee
- Mohua Bose – Associate VPAA, Institutional Effectiveness, SLAC Chairperson
- Lisa Yu – Associate Director of Institutional Effectiveness
- **Joseph McCollum – Associate Professor of Business Analytics, School of Business Assessment Coordinator**
- **Tim Reno – Associate Dean of Liberal Arts – School of Liberal Arts Assessment Coordinator**
- **Tom Giarla – Associate Professor of Biology, School of Science Assessment Coordinator**
- Angela Mckeever – Assistant Dean, School of Science
- Britt Haas – Teaching Professor, First Year Seminar
- Vicki Parson – Director of Standish Library
- Darren Lim – Associate Professor of Computer Science, Director of Core
- Kathleen Renaud – Assistant Dean of Administration, School of Liberal Arts
- Diane Hannahs – Assistant Dean, School of Business
- Michelle Liptak – Teaching Professor, First Year Seminar

*Note your school assessment coordinator (bold).