

*Report on the Status of Assessment and
the Quality of Educational Effectiveness at the University,
For the 2015-2016 Academic Year*

Penned and Presented by the University Assessment Committee
to the University of New England Community,
Fall 2016

I. INTRODUCTION

The University Assessment Committee (UAC), a 12-member committee made up of faculty and administrative representatives in every University of New England (UNE) college, has put together this annual report, which synthesizes and analyzes the Academic Year (AY) 2015-2016 annual program, student support services, and college and division assessment reports as well as the seven AY 2015-2016 program reviews. In addition, the UAC closely tracks university-wide data and metrics, and will report these figures when relevant. The UAC took a number of steps in AY 2015-2016, as described below, to further the assessment process and support assessment work across the university. This report documents the UAC's ongoing efforts to refine the UNE assessment process and is intended to improve communication on assessment across the university by highlighting the status of the assessment system and making recommendations for action, based on the data collected, to implement as soon as reasonably possible.

AY 2015-2016 assessment reports reveal that assessment work is taking place at various stages across the university. Every program is engaged in assessing student learning to some degree, from writing and refining student learning outcomes to developing and implementing direct/indirect, qualitative/quantitative, and formative/summative measures based on the learning outcomes, and from collecting, synthesizing, and analyzing assessment data to implementing changes according to that data to improve students' knowledge and skills. Note that because the annual assessment reports ask programs to "identify and examine assessment results for the most strategic or compelling learning outcomes for this year," the UAC's report reflects only the information provided by programs, colleges, and divisions. In other words, programs, colleges, and divisions are likely conducting more work on assessment than what is described here.

In its analysis, the UAC sees two overarching goals entwined in the data: educational effectiveness and programmatic effectiveness. Annual program assessment reports in particular have interwoven these two objectives in their reflections on the assessment of student learning, and yet educational effectiveness and programmatic effectiveness differ in essential ways. Assessing educational effectiveness requires defining, measuring, and evaluating student attainment of the knowledge and skills they need to acquire prior to graduation in order to meet graduation requirements and succeed in their chosen graduate school or professional career path. Assessing programmatic effectiveness requires identifying the goals of the program and evaluating fulfillment of those goals in order to strengthen that program overall. While programmatic effectiveness is important and can certainly influence educational effectiveness, the UAC will focus, in this report, specifically on the analysis of student learning assessment (educational effectiveness).

“Closing the Loop” on the AY 2014-2015 Assessment Findings

In response to the UAC’s recommendations in its AY 2014-2015 annual report, the UAC took the following steps:

1. For the UAC’s first recommendation, assist programs to use the reporting process and develop student learning outcome goals that raise the bar for student learning, UAC representatives made themselves available and each college and program addressed the recommendation as needed. For example, the colleges: organized workshops and retreats; held regular meetings with program directors, chairs, and assessment specialists; distributed assessment guidelines to complete the annual report; and established an assessment committee. See Section IV, “Colleges’ and Divisions’ Assessment Activities” (below), for the activities of each college.
2. For the UAC’s second recommendation, provide more training on assessment and assistance in preparing the reports, UAC representatives also made themselves available and each college and program addressed the recommendation as needed. See Section IV, “Colleges’ and Divisions’ Assessment Activities” (below), for the activities of each college.
3. For the UAC’s third recommendation, invite additional non-academic divisions in the assessment process, the UAC added a Library Services representative to the committee.
4. Improving students’ written communication skills, a common request from the AY 2014-2015 reports, and the UAC’s fourth recommendation, was not promoted at the university-wide level; however, the assessment process led the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) to implement changes on its own. The English department began a new two-semester English composition “stretch” course for students who came to UNE needing more writing instruction. The Biology program also responded to the assessment data of senior courses by coordinating writing assignments throughout its four-year curriculum to improve students’ scientific communication skills.
5. The fifth recommendation, put together a voluntary task force on improving students’ professional and personal behavioral skills, was not promoted at the university-wide level, but it was addressed within a number of different colleges, including CAS, the Westbrook College of Health Professions (WCHP), the College of Osteopathic Medicine (COM), and the College of Pharmacy (COP).

In addition to the above actions, the UAC took the following steps to improve the university-wide assessment system:

1. Added a replacement for the COM representative.
2. Updated the UAC web page (which is linked to the Provost’s web page) with a more accurate description of the committee’s charge, the Assessment Reporting System flow

chart, and links to the UAC's handbook and its AY 2014-2015 annual report. (Go to: <http://www.une.edu/academics/provost/uac>)

3. Changed the methods of communication between the UAC and the UNE administration to allow for more direct communication with UNE leadership and sharing of the results of the assessment process with the UNE community. (See new information flow chart on the UAC's web page.)
4. The UAC also used the responses in the AY 2014-2015 program and college and division assessment reports to revise the AY 2015-2016 report forms.
 - a. In the *Annual Program Improvement and Assessment Report, 2015-2016* form, the committee kept in place the NEASC E.1: Part A table (for non-accredited academic programs) and the E.1: Part B table (for accredited academic programs). The UAC then added a section before the E.1: Part A table, entitled "2014-2015 Reflections," that asked three questions on the actions taken as a result of the assessment findings from the previous academic year, as well as a section after the E.1: Part B table, entitled "2015-2016 Assessments," that asked four questions on the program's assessment activities and findings from that current academic year. The questions in each section of the form were revised to better emphasize the importance of collecting long-term data of student learning and implementing changes (or "closing the loop") in response to those findings to improve student learning.
 - b. In the *Annual College and Division Improvement and Assessment Report, 2015-2016* form, the college and division Deans were asked to synthesize, analyze, and draw conclusions from the data in their program reports. The UAC removed the tables from the preceding year's report form and essentially added two more questions that asked colleges and divisions about the efforts they will pursue in response to their programs' assessment work.

II. ASSESSMENT REPORTS: FINDINGS

A. Academic Program Assessment Reports

In AY 2015-2016, the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment (OIRA) received 53 program assessment reports. The following data are derived from 40 of the 53 reports (excluding the 2 Health Informatics reports, as they are new programs, and the 11 CAS Core Area reports. The CAS Core summary report is included in the data to represent the CAS Core Area reports).

1. Reported Actions Taken

Part 1, "2014-2015 Reflections," questions 1-3, in the program assessment reports, asked programs about the actions they took based on their AY 2014-2015 assessment findings, the outcome of those actions, and the work that remains.

- Of the 40 program reports, 38 (95%) reported taking actions from their assessment findings.

2. Reported Direct and Indirect Measures

According to the reported responses in Part 1, “2014-2015 Reflections,” questions 1-3, and in Part 2, “2015-2016 Reporting: NEASC Part A: For Non-Accredited Academic Programs,” in the program assessment reports:

- Of the 40 program reports, 40 (100%) reported using direct measures of assessment.
- Of the 40 program reports, 28 (70%) reported using indirect measures of assessment.

The most common direct measures were as follows:

- Of the 40 program reports, 17 (42.5%) reported using senior capstones (including written work and presentations); 17 (42.5%) reported using in-class quizzes, exams, and assignments; and 15 (37.5%) reported using licensure or standardized test scores to measure student learning.

The most common indirect measures were as follows:

- Of the 40 program reports, 16 (40%) reported using student surveys; 4 (10%) reported using end-of-semester self-evaluations; 3 (7.5%) reported using job placement rates; and 3 (7.5%) reported using interviews and conversations with students.

3. Reported Strengths and Areas of Concern in Student Learning

Part 4, “2015-2016 Assessments,” questions 1-2, asked programs to describe their student learning strengths and areas of concern, based on their assessment data.

The most common student learning strengths reported were as follows:

- Of the 40 program reports, 19 (47.5%) reported strengths in student learning of discipline-specific knowledge; 11 (27.5%) in practical application of knowledge; and 9 (22.5%) in written and/or oral communication skills.

The most common student learning areas of concern reported were as follows:

- Of the 40 program reports, 7 (17.5%) reported discipline-specific knowledge; and 5 (12.5%) reported written and/or oral communication skills. Other concerns included student learning in math, statistics, computation, and quantitative skills; critical thinking; and using primary sources.

It is important to note that the two questions on the programs’ strengths and areas of concern elicited mixed data. Some programs that reported strengths of student learning in certain areas, such as discipline-specific knowledge and practical application of knowledge, also reported concerns in those same areas. Likewise, programs explained

that assessment measures showed student strength in demonstrating or applying some learning outcomes and weakness in demonstrating or applying other outcomes.

Also, many programs reported strengths and areas of concern that are related to student learning (educational effectiveness), but can be better described as elements of programmatic effectiveness. For example, the following items were listed in one or more of the 40 program reports (number of programs listing each as a strength/area of concern is provided, along with the percentage):

- Assessment measures
 - Strength: 3 (7.5%)
 - Area of concern: 9 (22.5%)
- Faculty training in assessment
 - Strength: 1 (2.5%)
 - Area of concern: 2 (5%)
- Job or graduate school placement rates
 - Strength: 2 (5%)
- Student learning outcomes stated in syllabi
 - Area of concern: 2 (5%)
- Course or curriculum revision
 - Area of concern: 4 (10%)
- Mapping student learning outcomes to program outcomes
 - Area of concern: 2 (5%)

The highest number of programs (9 or 22.5%) reported as an area of concern their need to put in place or revise assessment measures, which would fall under programmatic effectiveness. The UAC and this report focus on assessing educational effectiveness at the university, but the committee acknowledges that programmatic issues can have an impact on student learning.

4. Reported Plans to “Close the Loop” in AY 2016-2017

In Part 4, “2015-2016 Assessments,” question 3, which asks what changes programs plan to implement in AY 2016-2017 as a result of their assessment findings, the UAC found:

- Of the 38* program reports, 36 (95%) mentioned the changes they plan to implement in response to their AY 2015-2016 assessment findings.

**These data exclude one program that did not answer question 3, the changes it plans to implement in AY 2016-2017, and one program that had no students in it to assess.*

5. Reported Requested Assistance, Guidance, and Resources

In response to Part 4, “2015-2016 Assessments,” question 4, on the assistance, guidance, and resources programs would find helpful in order to meet strategic program-level needs, the most common responses were as follows:

- Of the 40 program reports, 12 (30%) request support for assessment, including faculty training and data collection (from, for example, the administration, faculty, the Center for the Enrichment of Teaching & Learning (CETL), OIRA, and Career Services); 9 (22.5%) ask to hire more full-time faculty; and 8 (20%) seek additional support for library sources, software, conferences, promotional materials, speakers, adjunct training, and course redesign.

As with the strengths and areas of concern questions, this question elicited many responses related to programmatic operational needs, such as hiring more full-time faculty and getting additional support for library sources. The UAC acknowledges the intrinsic connection between programmatic operational resources and student learning success, and seeks to highlight programs' needs in this report and bring those needs to the UNE leadership's attention. However, the UAC is charged with supporting assessment of student learning.

B. Student Support Services Assessment Reports

For two consecutive years, AY 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, the UAC has made it a goal to encourage more university-wide student-facing units to complete the student support services annual assessment report. The student-facing units are particularly influential in providing co-curricular support and experiences that will cultivate in students well-rounded and well-informed qualities that they can carry with them in their personal and professional lives.

The Division of Student Affairs has been involved in the UAC for the last two years. In AY 2015-2016, a representative from Library Services joined the committee, and the library submitted an annual assessment report. Inviting other student-facing units may require each unit to deepen its commitment toward refining its student learning outcomes, assessing those outcomes, acting on that data, and articulating its assessment process in an annual assessment report. The UAC may also need to guide new units on assessment practices and the UNE assessment process. The UAC acknowledges the importance of co-curricular assessment and will continue to pursue bringing more student-facing units into the university-wide assessment system moving forward in order to gather and analyze aggregate data that reflect the assessment work of these units as a whole.

C. College and Division Assessment Reports

While each program is at a different stage of developing its assessment process, collecting data on student learning, and implementing changes based on the results, the UNE colleges and divisions have seen increased involvement from their programs in assessment work overall.

According to the college and division assessment reports, more faculty and programs engaged in assessment activities in AY 2015-2016 than in AY 2014-2015, including: revising student learning outcomes; mapping program learning outcomes to course learning outcomes; creating a repository of instructional resources related to assessment

practices; developing new assessment measures; revising courses and pedagogical methods; instituting new courses and prerequisites; adding an early intervention initiative for struggling students; and restructuring course sequencing. More programs in AY 2015-2016 also used their assessment data to “close the loop,” making course and curricular changes to improve student learning.

CAS noted, in its annual college assessment report, that assessment reporting “improved considerably” in AY 2015-2016. Furthermore, the CAS program assessment reports included, “more specific and quantitative information in their results and interpretation.” However, the CAS report explained that a few program reports “lacked details” on the specific findings about student learning.

Some Deans noted in their reports that programs discussed assessment of their particular programs rather than student learning. CAS explained, “Some departmental reports focused more on identifying programmatic areas needing attention as a result of their assessment findings rather than focusing on individual aspects of student learning.” The College of Graduate and Professional Studies (CGPS) noted “the apparent confusion between program assessment and student learning assessment” in its program reports. COP also recognized the difficulty in differentiating educational and programmatic effectiveness in its assessment work, explaining that the “charges” that have come out of its assessment findings were “not exclusively tied to student learning” but rather “mostly Programmatic Assessment.”

UNE’s colleges plan to work with programs to make student learning, rather than programmatic appraisal, the focus of assessment work in the future. CAS “will work with these departments during the upcoming academic year to refocus their attention on student learning.” CGPS suggests “a need for education and development to progress from developing precursors to student learning improvement to fully articulated plans for targeted student learning improvement.” In this report, the UAC also makes recommendations, based on the data, to further differentiate educational and programmatic effectiveness by revising the AY 2016-2017 annual assessment reports and recommending to the UNE leadership that university offices such as the OIRA and CETL provide support for assessment to the academic programs and student support services.

Like the programs, some colleges in their reports ask for more support from the university to further their assessment work and their learning outcomes. COM, for instance, requests an additional hire and assistance from university units, such as the OIRA, for assessment. “The main challenge,” COM explained, “is the lack of time and staff to create and implement systems to gather and analyze data.” WCHP asked for “additional resources to support assessment for our co-curricular endeavors of IPE (Interprofessional Education) and service learning.” Library Services identified “a constant need to liaise and to work with faculty and other departments to infuse” their learning outcomes of library and information literacy “into the UNE assessment culture from the beginning to the completion of the students’ academic career.”

In its annual college assessment report, WCHP also highlighted that more of its programs in AY 2015-2016 collected and used direct and indirect assessment measures, one of the College's goals that year. "Review of the various program learning outcome reports reveals the incorporation of both direct and indirect measures," WCHP explained, "or a plan to secure additional units of measurement in future years." WCHP also recognized that some of its programs "expressed the need to improve response rates for Graduate (Alumnae) Satisfaction surveys." WCHP went on, "Having adequate data from our alumnae is an on-going issue," which several programs highlighted in their AY 2015-2016 program reviews (see below) and therefore the UAC added to its recommendations.

On another note, Core Area Coordinators in CAS began their first year in 2015-2016 formalizing the assessment process of the Social and Global Awareness (SGA), Explorations (EXP), and Advanced Studies (ADV) Core course offerings in Tangier, Morocco with the overseas faculty. Together, the CAS Dean's office, the UNE Global Studies office, and the Core Area Coordinators have been working with the Tangier faculty to collect assessment data using direct and indirect measures. Some of the Tangier faculty have started to collect data, while others have not yet begun the process.

Collectively, the college and division reports indicate that more plans are in place to support and advance assessment work in each college/division this year as opposed to last year. Examples of plans include increasing full-time and adjunct faculty participation in assessment; ensuring compliant syllabi; formalizing and expanding the assessment process of each program; leading assessment workshops and trainings; and considering curricular changes based on board and licensure exam rates. As it should be, assessment of student learning is progressing and evolving at the university. The College of Dental Medicine (CDM) put it well: "We continue to discuss assessment regularly within the College and are making efforts to 'close the loop' by ensuring that any data collected are communicated with all necessary parties."

III. PROGRAM REVIEWS

In the AY 2015-2016, seven academic units followed the steps in the program review process and, in a timely manner: submitted a self-study to the Provost, their Dean, their external reviewer (if applicable), and the OIRA; had an external reviewer visit campus and write an appraisal of the program (if applicable); received the Dean's response (optional); and provided a departmental response (optional). All seven programs have met with the Provost and Dean and finalized their list of action items that resulted from the review. All of the reports from the program reviews are housed in the OIRA. On the whole, the program review process is working well, and, for the most part, the programs are highlighting their assessment work in their self-studies.

While programs addressed their particular histories, practices, and needs in their self-studies, the focus in this section of the UAC report relates to the programs' discussion of assessment of student learning in their program reviews. Of the seven self-studies, all seven listed their student learning outcomes and six mentioned carrying out and evaluating at least some assessment

measures of their students. The self-studies therefore suggest that the degree of assessing student learning varied across programs, some reporting more assessment practices than others, but most highlighting their engagement in assessment. Moving forward, the UAC and the OIRA will work directly with the College Deans and the individual programs undergoing a review to ensure that they address their assessment work in their self-studies.

Of the four external reviewer reports, one external reviewer described one of the programs' documentation of its student learning outcomes as "outstanding." One program mentioned it assesses every course using a range of direct and indirect measures, and another program discussed its assessment of each student learning outcome. In another report, an external reviewer called for "more robust" assessment of learning outcomes. Several reports mentioned some of the direct and indirect measures they use, but four of those reports also specified the need to collect alumni data to use as another assessment measure, an action item that the UAC has added in this report to its list of recommendations to the university.

Several programs indicated on their list of action items that they plan to continue refining and expanding their assessment process. One of the programs explained that it has already met with the Dean and "outlined actions that will develop direct and indirect assessment methods and rubrics." Another program listed six action items on assessment alone, including refining "assessment of classes to survey a single assignment over many years" and creating a "portfolio of assessed works to use as a reference." Another program plans to "refine student data collection" by collecting alumni data and creating a focus group of graduates in the major.

IV. COLLEGES' AND DIVISIONS' ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

College of Arts and Sciences:

The CAS Dean's office conducted a variety of activities during AY 2015-2016 to support the assessment process in the college. Dean Hey continued to provide financial support for Core curriculum assessment efforts, including compensation for Core assessment leaders and funding for campus workshops. Workshops were held in August, January, and May to continue the work on Core curriculum assessment. On these days, Core Area Coordinators met with faculty who teach in the different Core areas to develop plans for assessment methods for the year, review results of assessment activities, develop conclusions and implications, compile information for assessment reports, and make plans for curricular revisions to "close the loop."

In addition, CAS Associate Dean Gray held regular meetings with the Core curriculum assessment coordinator to discuss issues and set priorities for aspects of the Core assessment process needing the focused attention of the Core Area assessment groups. Associate Dean Gray also met with Core Area Coordinators and academic department Chairs, program directors, and/or faculty to discuss ways to make improvements to methodologies and report content and quality over last year.

To improve assessment reporting and familiarize reporting groups with the new reporting form for AY 2015-2016, Associate Dean Gray prepared and distributed a list of Assessment Guidelines and held a workshop to review the new form and share examples of high-quality reports. As part of this workshop, faculty from the Biological Sciences Department and the

Neuroscience program gave presentations on their exemplary assessment process, reporting, and curricular revision activities. Dean Hey also provided funding for Associate Dean Gray to attend the Association of American Colleges & Universities (AAC&U) annual conference on General Education and Assessment.

Westbrook College of Health Professions:

WCHP engaged in numerous college-level activities addressing assessment of academic programming and student learning outcomes. In the summer of 2015, the health, wellness and occupational studies (HWOS) program engaged in a curriculum evaluation effort. This summer endeavor included a comprehensive mapping of course-level objectives to programmatic student learning outcomes facilitated by the HWOS Program Director (Caryn Husman) and WCHP Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (Karen Pardue). Learning activities in each course were examined, and artifacts and evidence of student learning/achievement were archived. This comprehensive review was timely, as HWOS reflects an undergraduate major with only two graduated cohorts in 2014 and 2015. This activity supported total quality improvement for this new baccalaureate degree, and provided a foundation for preparing the full HWOS program review, which was submitted in Spring 2016.

The Department of Physical Therapy (PT) engaged in a day-long retreat in August 2015 examining course-level objectives and how these align/support program student learning outcomes. This session was facilitated by the PT Program Director (Mike Sheldon) and WCHP Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (Karen Pardue). All faculty were in attendance with robust participation. Additionally, time was dedicated to examining assessment across different domains of learning, with a special emphasis on the affective domain. As health profession programs commonly advance an outcome, which focuses on developing caring, compassionate professionals, approaches to authentic assessment in the affective domain was well-considered.

The WCHP program directors dedicated four hours to program assessment and learning outcomes as part of their January 2016 leadership retreat. Directors exchanged previously submitted NEASC E1: Part A forms and provided peer-critique and feedback as to clarity of expression as well as alternate approaches for evidence of student learning. Additionally, the concept of a college-wide assessment addressing one select outcome (e.g. skillful writing, oral communication, critical thinking) was explored. Assessment resources from the AAC&U were introduced, and consideration was given to conceptualizing WCHP students from undergraduate (milestone level) to graduate (capstone level). Select AAC&U Valid Assessment of Learning in Undergraduate Education (VALUE) rubrics were explored and the leadership team decided to revisit this proposal as part of the summer 2016 WCHP leadership retreat.

Comprehensive accreditation self-study reports were submitted by the Physician Assistant (PA) program (submitted to ARC-PA) and by the Department of Dental Hygiene (submitted to CDDA) as part of the program re-accreditation process. The PA program hosted an on-site accreditation visit in Spring 2016, and was subsequently notified of a full 10-year re-accreditation. Dental hygiene will be hosting a site re-accreditation visit in September 2016. In AY 2015-2016, HWOS and the Interprofessional Education curriculum (IHS course offerings) each completed a program review. The major of athletic training completed additional curricular and student learning outcomes assessment, as the program engaged in degree modification from

the current baccalaureate (B.S.) to an entry-level Master's degree. This new M.S. in Athletic Training is due to launch in Fall 2017.

Online College of Graduate and Professional Studies:

CGPS has engaged in many assessment activities in AY 2015-2016. Notably, CGPS has expanded its assessment staff to include an Assessment Specialist who collaborates with the academic programs within the college and the college's instructional design team to enhance learning outcomes at the program, course, and individual assessment level. The Assessment Specialist also works with the college's leadership to improve the specificity and efficacy of assessment activities at all levels in the college. The Assessment Specialist, the Director of Pedagogy and Assessment, and the Dean led the successful development and implementation of a robust assessment plan for the college, including the analysis of learning analytics on a course-by-course basis, annual program assessments, and an accelerated program review cycle occurring every three years.

Specific areas of improvement relating to assessment in AY 2015-2016 include:

- Review and enhancement of program-level learning outcomes.
- Analysis and enhancement of the alignment between programmatic learning outcomes and program curricula.
- Increased efforts to make all course rubrics clear and effective assessment tools.
- Professional development opportunities for faculty on assessment concepts, tools, and best practices.
- Increased support for programmatic assessment activities and pilot projects.
- Enhanced program review criteria that fully integrate the college's professional capacity for both internal and market assessments with the more traditional markers of programmatic health and success.
- Successful migration to Salesforce, allowing the collection, reporting, and analysis of a wide range of data integrally related to student learning, satisfaction, and success.

College of Osteopathic Medicine:

The UNE COM Assessment Committee was established in Fall 2015 and was charged with broad oversight of student, faculty, and program assessment. Although meetings of this group have been irregular, the committee has raised awareness within the college regarding the value of assessment. In addition, a sub-committee for student assessment was formed soon after and has been gathering information about assessment practices across the four years of the curriculum.

Notable actions were taken by UNE COM in the last year. Mapping of the curriculum was identified as a critical need as it has not been done in a rigorous fashion since the inception of the College in 1978. Mapping has begun and is ongoing. A group of faculty and administrators have begun the process of “backward design” using Osteopathic Considerations for Core Entrustable Professional Activities for Entering Residency (EPAs) as the ultimate goalposts for UNE COM graduates. This curricular realignment is anticipated to have a significant impact on the content, nature, and timing of student assessment. Also, in the wake of increasing horizontal and vertical integration of the pre-clinical curriculum, numerous assessments have been refined and implemented. Principle examples of these are concept mapping of clinical cases with basic

science concepts, increasing reliance on objective examination items with clinical vignettes, informal and formal oral exams in both the first- and second-year curricula, and physician skills testing aligned with specific student outcomes. Programmatically, we closely monitor student progress in all four years, and have implemented early warning processes in the first semester of the first year. Board pass rates place UNE COM students above the median for Level 1, Level 2 PE, and Level 3.

College of Pharmacy:

COP undertook several assessment-related activities and assessment training in AY 2015-2016. The program gathered data for the Overall Evaluation Plan for the first cycle. The Overall Evaluation Plan contains a mix of programmatic, curricular, and student learning assessment. Results were reviewed by the Assessment and Evaluation (A&E) Committee and many recommendations were made. Some of these recommendations are being built into charges for several committees for AY 2016-2017. COP administrated the PCOA exam for the first time in January 2016. Results were obtained in the late Spring and investigated by the A&E committee. A few recommendations regarding weaknesses were noted and passed along to the Academic Affairs committee for consideration to address with the new curriculum. At least one faculty development session was devoted to assessment to assist faculty with assessing students. With the new curriculum, the A&E committee is developing standardized rubrics for many of the affective skills (communication, professionalism, teamwork, etc.) that all courses will have to use in order to measure growth of these traits through pharmacy school.

College of Dental Medicine:

CDM has recently made, and continues to make, a concerted effort to improve assessment of student learning, communication of assessment results, and mechanisms for “closing the loop” on assessment through data-driven plans of action. One area of focus has been developing both formative and summative assessment measures for the CDM’s defined competency statements (learning outcomes) as well as for students’ overall competency during the clinically-focused third and fourth years of the DMD program. The following assessment measures have recently been implemented/revised or are currently in the final stages of development:

- Clinical Care Feedback: A new assessment method for the clinical environment that provides students with formative faculty feedback around key competency domains (communication, professionalism, procedure quality, etc.) on a daily basis.
- Student Progress Reviews: SPRs are recurring, structured assessments used to evaluate overall progress in multiple domains. They are formative in nature throughout students’ third and fourth years and summative in nature in the semester prior to graduation. For each SPR, the student is evaluated by his/her Group Practice Leader and completes a self-assessment.
- Competency Statement Self-Assessment Surveys: This self-assessment survey allows students to reflect on their progression toward competency for each of the CDM’s learning outcomes. The survey is completed at the end of the third year and then following each of three clinical rotations during the fourth year to provide longitudinal data on growth.
- Clinical Skills Assessments: CSA exam rubrics are currently undergoing a systematic review, and each CSA is being explicitly mapped to competency statements (learning

outcomes). The tracking of student performance on CSAs has also been improved so that gaps in student learning can be identified and addressed.

- Case Presentations: A rubric was developed for evaluating student case presentations. This rubric emphasized evaluation of the College's evidence-based dentistry learning outcomes, among others.

With all new assessment measures, faculty are trained and calibrated with the intent of achieving reasonable consistency and validity in their use of the forms and rubrics.

Finally, the CDM's Assessment and Outcomes Committee (AOC), as a relatively new committee in this young college, continues to develop and define its role and responsibilities. The AOC reviewed student learning assessment data from AY 2015-2016 and summarized its findings in the annual program report to the UAC and college Dean. The AOC now seeks to involve more faculty in the process of data collection and review, as well as to improve communication of assessment results within the college so that data can inform curricular changes, budgeting processes, and future assessment efforts. Assessment of student learning will continue to be a priority as the CDM prepares for an accreditation site-visit in April 2017 and graduation of its inaugural class in May 2017.

Division of Student Affairs:

The departments of the Division of Student Affairs conducted a number of different point-of-service evaluations to determine the effectiveness of the services provided that contribute to student learning. For instance, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), MAPWorks, and Campus Life Team Surveys were administered. Through an evaluation of the many tools utilized, two challenges were evident: survey fatigue and the usefulness of some collected data.

Recognizing surveys as its primary mode of data collection, Student Affairs undertook a careful review of its timing in administering those surveys. Student Affairs generated a division-wide Survey Schedule in an effort to inform the timing of future surveys. Populating and modifying the surveys remain a priority through the next academic year. In addition, Student Affairs initiated a review of the tools utilized, and the decisions to continue, discontinue, or identify new instruments. Among the instruments identified for future use include the Adult Student Priorities Survey (ASPS) and the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI), both of which Ruffalo Noel Levitz administer. Student Affairs eliminated the use of the MAPWorks tool, as it was identified as redundant, given UNE's adoption of the Student Success Collaborative platform (Educational Advisory Board).

Upon completion of this year's assessment activities, Student Affairs identified three distinct areas as priorities. Climate, student experience, and the availability and use of technologies each contribute to the environment in which students learn and the tools they access in the learning process. In Student Affairs, which understands that a shared effort should stimulate the greatest impact, each department has taken up work towards these priorities.

V. UAC's Final Recommendations, Based on AY 2015-2016 Assessment Data

Based on the AY 2015-2016 data and discussions surrounding the report (described in Sections II and III), the UAC will work on the following:

1. Continue to evaluate and update the questions on the AY 2016-2017 annual program, student support services, and college and division reporting forms.
2. Invite more university-wide student-facing units, such as Athletics, to complete a student support services annual assessment report form.
3. Work to improve communication between the UAC and UNE leadership by presenting these annual recommendations to university leadership and following up on their response.

Based on the data and discussions surrounding the report, the UAC recommends the university examine ways of addressing the following:

1. The program assessment reports provide documentation that 95% of reporting programs have taken actions as a result of assessment. The UAC would like to see 100% of programs reporting taking actions in response to their assessment findings.
2. The program assessment reports provide documentation that 95% of reporting programs mentioned the changes they plan to implement in response to their AY 2015-2016 assessment findings. The UAC would like to see 100% of reporting programs mention the changes they plan to implement in response to the current year's assessment findings.
3. In the program assessment reports, some programs reported the strengths/areas of concern of their particular program, rather than the strengths/areas of concern of student learning. More guidance may be needed to help faculty complete the report forms and target assessment efforts to this goal.
4. Based on the comments in the program assessment reports, the UAC also recommends examining whether university offices, such as CETL and the OIRA, may provide further necessary assistance to programs in developing and strengthening their assessment process. Such assistance may include revising student learning outcomes, developing direct/indirect and qualitative/quantitative measures, and synthesizing and analyzing assessment data.
5. Consider ways to continue the momentum that has begun in assessment work by putting resources where they can be most effective. This can include inviting consultants, holding workshops, or using financial resources to support the ongoing work.
6. Based on comments in more than half of the AY 2015-2016 program reviews, the UAC believes that assessment of student learning would be enhanced by having more feedback data from alumni on their educational experiences at UNE.

VI. CONCLUSION

Participation in the university-wide assessment system is becoming more robust. Every UNE program is involved in the process and is assessing student learning to varying degrees. Some programs are in the early stages of assessment, while others have developed more rigorous processes and collected long-term data that they are using to identify educational effectiveness and advance their curriculum.

The UAC members continue to refine the university-wide assessment process. Their goals for the coming year include: evaluating and updating the annual program, student support services, and college and division report forms; inviting more university-wide student-facing units to complete an annual assessment report form; creating more transparency with the university community on the status of the assessment system; communicating the reasons for refining the process; and ensuring that the evidence-based recommendations in this report are conveyed to and followed up with the university leadership.

At a meeting in the Fall 2016 semester, the UAC presented to the UNE leadership an update on the current status of the university-wide assessment process and the recommendations as discussed in this report. The UAC and OIRA have planned to follow up with the UNE leadership at a later date to get an update on their decisions on this report's recommendations. It is a principal goal of the UAC to make sure it "closes the loop" on its own recommendations.