Educational Programs Engaged in the Assessment Cycle

Program Type	2022	2023	Trend	Goal	MFI Rating
Career Technical (CTE)	50%	53%	↑	85%	
Field of Study (FOS)	31%	48%	↑	85%	
Skill Development (SD)	0%	50%	↑	85%	

Mission Fulfillment Indicator (MFI) 8 measures the percentage of programs engaged in activities defined as part of the "assessment cycle," including: revisions to learning outcomes, changes to curriculum, collection of evidence, and/or use of results to support student learning. The data above is gathered using the Watermark: Student Learning & Licensure software, which allows faculty to enter holistic assessments for each student in each course they teach during a given term. For data tracking purposes, educational programs are divided into award-conferring (Career Technical), non-award-conferring or transfer oriented programs (Field of Study), and foundational (Skill Development) programs.

Discussion

The proportion of academic areas that are engaged in the Assessment Cycle increased across campus in the 2022-2023 academic year, rising from 38% of all current programs in 2021-2022 to 50% of all current programs in 2022-2023. Career Technical Education (CTE) programs entered the second year of assessment plan implementation, though not all CTE areas completed plans or implemented their extant plans during the 2022-2023 academic year. Transfer areas, referred to as Fields of Study, began collecting data using current systems and processes with varying levels of success and engagement across divisions. Additionally, state legislation mandating the development of shared course outcomes impacted several transfer areas in 2022-2023 and will
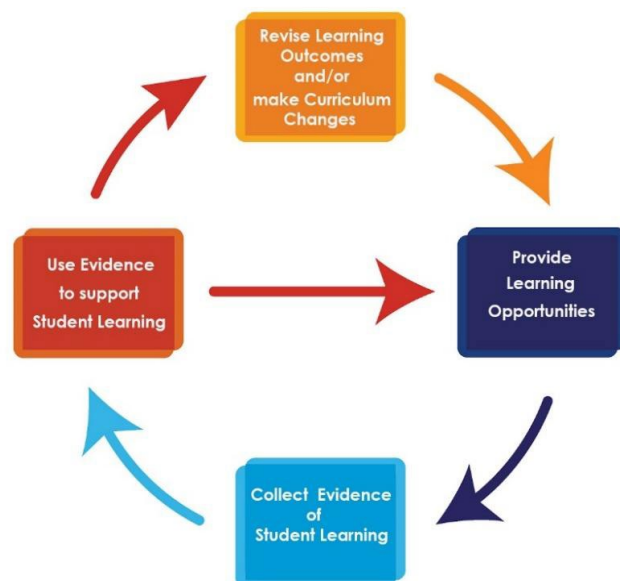

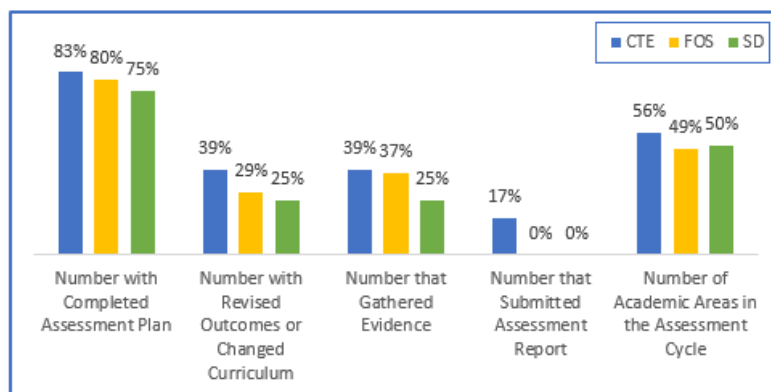Figure 1: The Learning Outcomes Assessment Cycle

continue to be a factor in future years. Some areas that delayed implementation of their assessment plans find themselves in transitional periods regarding staffing or program changes, while others continue to discuss and develop a common understanding of the process for gathering, reporting, and using assessment data. While most areas engaged in the collection of data regarding student learning have focused on course level outcomes,

Figure 2: Stage in Assessment Cycle by Program

some areas are discussing whether other types of evidence would best support continuous improvement of learning and student success.

Peer Comparisons

The accreditation process calls for evidence-informed self-reflection along with meaningful comparison against peers to provide a contextualized perspective on an institution's quality. While different institutions' assessment systems are unique, some comparison is possible. For example, at Whatcom Community College in Bellingham, WA, assessment data is reported in terms of students' attainment of expected outcomes. Whatcom reports that, of the 57 program outcomes assessed over the last five years, 8 were above expectations, 48 were at expectations, and one was assessed below expectations. In 2021-22, 90% (73/81) of full-time faculty and 60% (122/202) of adjunct faculty (69% overall) submitted a course outcome report. In spring 2022, 74% of 540 course syllabi reviewed had correct course outcomes listed.

Lessons Learned & Next Steps

Thanks to increasing engagement in assessment across campus, LCC is learning from the challenges inherent in expanding and sustaining engagement in learning outcomes assessment. During 2022-2023, three important lessons became clear:

> First, hiring new faculty can slow progress on assessment plans as programs temporarily shift focus to onboarding new colleagues and supporting their integration into the program and LCC's assessment processes.

> Second, because assessment activities are defined as part of the full-time faculty college service requirement and some faculty chose not to include assessment work as part of their service, many programs are experiencing discontinuity in the assessment process. In some areas, the lack of consistency has resulted in an inability to develop and/or successfully implement an assessment plan for the program.

> Finally, reliance on dispersed data systems has hindered LCC's ability to consistently track and report assessment data across campus. This is due to the fact that some areas on campus are gathering data in systems or formats other than Watermark because of extant standardized external assessment tools or program-specific accreditation needs. This impacts LCC's measurement of mission fulfillment in this area because assessment work being reported outside of Watermark is not currently integrated into the assessment of MFI 8. As a result, several programs are not represented in the MFI 8 data.

The Office of Curriculum and Assessment (OCA) will continue to investigate the efficacy of our data gathering and reporting tools to determine how to best support and document assessment efforts across campus.