2024-2025 Student Learning Assessment Summary

Mitsu Narui, Ph.D.
Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment
Office of Institutional Research & Planning

Overview: Annual Student Learning Assessment Process

I. Introduction and Purpose

This report provides an overview of the annual student learning assessment process for academic programs at The Ohio State University, along with aggregate results from 24-25 academic year. It highlights our systematic approach to ensuring and enhancing the quality of student learning across all disciplines. This continuous assessment cycle is fundamental to our commitment to academic excellence, continuous improvement, and accountability in higher education and illustrates how the university is nurturing an institutional culture of assessment.

II. Learning Outcomes at Ohio State

The university does not have a set of standard undergraduate learning outcomes. Instead, it has a set of General Education (GE) Learning Goals and Expected Learning Outcomes (ELOs). The GE curriculum allows students to choose from seven foundations and eight themes, along with two required bookend courses. In addition, programs must address Embedded Literacies within the major curriculum. Programs also have their own set of student learning outcomes (SLOs). The assessment cycle outlined below reflects the assessment planning process for these SLOs.

III. The Assessment Cycle: Plan, Results, and Action

The student learning assessment process at Ohio State operates on a continuous annual cycle, requiring active engagement from all academic programs throughout the year:

- **Summer: Planning and Preparation for the Upcoming Year**
    - Programs update assessment plans and data-collection instruments for the upcoming academic year.
    - This includes refining Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), clearly articulated, measurable statements of what students are expected to know, understand, and be able to do upon completion of the program.
    - Programs also identify Assessment Methods (specific tools or activities like capstone projects, rubrics for essays, standardized exams, portfolios) and outline their Data Collection Plan, including student samples or cohorts, and Criteria for Success (defined benchmarks).
    - By July 15, annual assessment reports (which include both the previous year's results) are typically due.
- **Autumn: Initial Data Collection and Action Planning from Previous Cycle**
    - Programs develop their action plan after discussing the previous year's assessment results with program stakeholders.
    - Data collection for the current year's assessment may begin if using Autumn data.
- **Spring: Ongoing Data Collection, Analysis, and Interpretation**

    - Programs continue to collect data for the current year's assessment.
    - The annual data set is finalized, and programs begin the analysis and interpretation of data gathered during the year.
- **End of Academic Year (Summer Transition): Results and Action Plan Submission**
    - By July 15, annual assessment reports are typically due, detailing the Summary of Findings from the completed assessment cycle.
    - This includes the Interpretation of Results (discussion of what data indicates about student learning, strengths, and areas needing improvement).
    - The submission outlines Proposed Actions/Improvements—specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) plans based on findings, aiming to improve teaching, curriculum, or student support.
    - Programs also include a reflection on the process, commenting on the effectiveness of methods and planned adjustments for future cycles.

IV. Impact and Value to The Ohio State University

This robust assessment framework provides several critical benefits to the university:

- **Evidence-Based Decision Making:** Provides concrete data to support programmatic decisions, curricular revisions, and resource allocation.
- **Enhanced Student Learning:** Drives continuous improvement in teaching and learning practices, ultimately leading to better student outcomes.
- **Accountability and Accreditation:** Demonstrates our commitment to quality assurance and meets requirements for regional and specialized accreditation.
- **Transparency and Communication:** Fosters a culture of open discussion about student achievement and programmatic effectiveness across the university.
- **Strategic Alignment:** Ensures that program-level learning outcomes align with institutional goals and the university's mission.

V. Conclusion

The annual student learning assessment process at The Ohio State University is an integral component of our commitment to academic excellence. By systematically planning, measuring, reflecting upon, and acting on student learning data throughout the assessment cycle, we ensure that our academic programs are continuously evolving to meet the needs of our students and the demands of a dynamic world. This collaborative effort across all academic units reinforces our dedication to providing an exceptional educational experience for every Ohio State student.

Annual Student Learning Assessment – Aggregate Results

I. Introduction and Purpose

This summary compiles and presents the **aggregate findings** from the annual student learning assessment submissions across all academic programs at The Ohio State University for the 2024-2025 academic year. This report aims to provide a high-level overview of student achievement, identify university-wide trends in learning outcomes assessment, highlight areas of programmatic excellence, and inform strategic decisions to foster continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

II. Methodology for Aggregation

The findings presented here are derived from the individual "Assessment Results and Action Plan" submissions by 271 academic programs. (See Appendix A for breakdown of submissions by college.) Data were analyzed to identify common themes, recurring strengths, persistent challenges, and innovative practices related to student achievement of student learning outcomes (SLOs). The analysis focused on:

- Overall success rates against established criteria for success.
- Common assessment methods utilized.
- Types of findings (e.g., direct vs. indirect evidence).
- Nature of proposed actions/improvements (e.g., curricular adjustments, pedagogical changes, student support enhancements).

III. University-Wide Trends and Key Findings

Across all assessed programs, several overarching trends and key findings emerged:

- **Overall Student Achievement: (**See Appendix B for breakdown of findings by college)

Finding	n
Criteria Met – Minimum	906
Criteria Met – Aspirational	1,058
Inconclusive	167
Criteria Not Met	250

    - A significant majority of programs (91%) reported that students met or exceeded expectations for most of their assessed learning outcomes.
- **Areas for Collective Improvement:**
    - Reason for inconclusiveness: Many graduate programs reported insufficient data due to low student numbers (e.g., Pharmaceutical Sciences MS and various Geography/Atmospheric Sciences PhD outcomes) or due to active revisions of assessment methods that suspended data collection for the 2024–2025 period (e.g., multiple Engineering PhD programs: Aero, Mechanical, and Nuclear).
- **Common Assessment Approaches:** (See Appendix C for breakdown of approaches by college)

Approach	n
Direct - Other	328
Direct - Embedded testing	250
Indirect - Survey (Student)	241
Direct - Writing assignment	213
Direct - Other classroom assessment methods	102

  - Capstone projects, comprehensive examinations, and embedded assignments utilizing rubrics remained the most prevalent direct assessment methods, providing rich qualitative and quantitative data. Examples include the direct assessment of Architecture studio grades and the use of the PhD Dissertation Oral Exam Rubric in Engineering, even where data collection was temporarily paused.

- **Nature of Programmatic Actions:** (See Appendix D for breakdown of actions by college, and see Appendix E for breakdown of types of dissemination by college)

Action	n
Continue to monitor	2,181
Other	104
Continue to collect data (small program size)	74
Changes in assessment methods	49
Course Inst. delivery/learning activities changes	31

  - The most overwhelmingly common action proposed by programs was to **Continue to monitor** (reported **2,181 times**), suggesting that for most outcomes, performance met expectations and the programs intend to sustain current efforts. **Continue to collect data (small program size)** (reported **74 times**), indicating a strategy for smaller graduate or specialized programs to accumulate sufficient longitudinal data for meaningful analysis.

  - **Changes in assessment methods** (reported **49 times**), reflecting a broader effort to redesign assessment tools (e.g., revisions to the Bachelor of Science in Pharmaceutical Sciences assessment methods) or address issues stemming from insufficient historical data.

  - **Course Instructional delivery/learning activities changes** (reported **31 times**), such as the Biological Sciences programs focusing on refining Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL) and Course-based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs) and Genetic Counseling modifying courses to prepare students for board exams

Dissemination	n
Analyze and discuss trends with the unit's faculty	1,791
Analyze and report to college/school	1,465
Periodically confirm that current curriculum and courses are facilitating student attainment of program goals	1,204
Shared with curriculum committee	1,093
Analyze and report to Graduate School/Institutional Committee	246

- Programs frequently emphasize utilizing Nuventive (Ohio State's learning outcome documenting and reporting system) to enter findings and disseminate documents for review among faculty, curricular coordinators, and leadership. This process supports **evidence-based decision making** and **continuous improvement.**

IV. Programmatic Highlights and Exemplary Practices

Exemplary programs demonstrated characteristics such as:

- **Clearly Defined Success Metrics**: They utilize specific, quantifiable criteria, often setting the aspirational goal higher than the minimum requirement (e.g., 90% or 95% threshold).
- **Use of Culminating Direct Methods**: They primarily rely on high-stakes, authentic direct methods such as thesis defenses, candidacy exams, capstone projects, and rubric-evaluated performance assessments (like clinical evaluations or comprehensive examinations).
- **High Attainment Rates**: They consistently meet or exceed the challenging criteria they set for themselves, often reporting attainment of the "Aspirational" criteria.
- **Documentation and Transparency**: They emphasize attaching supporting documents (rubrics, assessment plans), which strengthens the validity and replicability of the assessment process.

V. Implications and Recommendations for the University

The aggregated results suggest several areas where university-level attention or support could further enhance student learning outcomes:

- **Shift from "Continue to Monitor" to Specific, Measurable Action Plans:** The most frequent action type recorded across programs is "Continue to monitor" (reported 2,181 times in the aggregate summary). While monitoring is necessary, relying primarily on this action can indicate a lack of robust follow-up when criteria are met or narrowly missed.
    - **Recommendation:** When criteria are met (especially the aspirational outcome), programs should be encouraged or required to adopt a more specific action plan than just "Continue to monitor". For instance, programs could plan Course Instructional delivery/learning activities changes, aligning with the 31 instances where this type of change was reported.
        - **Example**: If a program meets the aspirational standard (e.g., 85% of students met the criterion for the final project), the action plan should specify curricular adjustments designed to raise the aspirational achievement rate, rather than simply monitoring future performance.
- **Address Inconclusive Data and Assessment Method Revision Backlogs:** A significant number of reported results were Inconclusive, sometimes due to small program size or data collection lapses caused by the pandemic's impact on prior reporting cycles. Additionally, many programs are actively restructuring or "re-envisioning" their assessment plans. This restructuring can take at least one academic year or longer.

    - **Recommendation**: Provide targeted support and resources to support the implementation of new or "re-envisioned" assessment plans and address data gaps:
        - **Focus on refining assessment methods** where intended goals are unclear or unattainable, such as the situation in Pharmaceutical Sciences (BS), where methods are expected to be revised in the coming year in response to a program outcomes revision process.
        - **Develop alternative direct methods for small programs**: For smaller graduate programs facing inconclusive data due to low student numbers, utilize high-impact, direct methods that require 100% participation (e.g., dissertation rubrics or thesis defenses) and analyze these qualitatively over multiple years rather than relying solely on numerical thresholds that require large cohorts.
        - **Formalize the removal or revision of ineffective assessment tools**: When assessment methods are clearly outdated or unused, as noted in Economics (BS), the department should formally decide whether to replace or refine the tool rather than simply documenting the need for future consideration.
- **Enhance the Quality and Actionability of Indirect Assessment:** While direct assessment measures learning, indirect assessments inform the learning environment and student perception. However, many indirect assessment criteria rely on broad student satisfaction ratings, often requiring only 70% agree or strongly agree or 50% of respondents indicating a good to great extent acquired skills.
    - **Recommendation**: Integrate indirect findings more deeply with curricular changes:
        - Increase the aspirational target for student preparation: Economics programs set the aspirational target for preparation for the job market and career importance at 75% of respondents indicating a good to great extent acquired skills. While the minimum was met, one key metric was missed (52% reported significant importance of career assistance, below the 75% aspirational goal in BA; 34% reported career assistance importance, missing the minimum criteria in BS). The program's action plan to hire a new Career Services Coordinator is a concrete step that addresses the specific deficiency noted in the survey data. This model—using weak indirect data to drive structural resource changes—could be replicated across units.
        - Suggest linkage between failed indirect metrics and curriculum analysis: When indirect surveys reveal low perceived competence or preparedness (like the career preparation results in Economics or the low achievement in Criminology proficiency questions), programs should initiate a formalized peer review or curriculum analysis to investigate the cause in the corresponding courses.
- **Standardize Review of Program Delivery and Resources:** Assessment should include critical self-reflection on program resources and delivery structure, as seen in the Optometry (OD)

program's finding that faculty peer-review requirements were nearly impossible to achieve for their small faculty, necessitating a revised schedule.

- **Recommendation**: Institutional Research and Planning (IRP) should encourage and facilitate internal review mechanisms that examine the feasibility of assessment requirements relative to faculty constraints and program size, ensuring that assessment standards, such as peer review schedules, are realistic and supportable by departmental resources. This would aid continuous academic improvement.

VI. Conclusion

The annual student learning assessment process continues to be a cornerstone of academic quality at The Ohio State University. The aggregate findings for 24-25 reveal a strong institutional commitment to understanding and improving student learning. By leveraging these insights, we can continue to refine our educational offerings, support our faculty, and ensure that all Ohio State graduates are well-prepared for their future endeavors. This collaborative effort underlines our dedication to continuous improvement and accountability in fulfilling our educational mission.

Appendix A: Assessment plan submissions by college

College	Number of Programs	Completed Assessment Plans	Percentage completed
Arts and Sciences	191	100	52.4
Fisher College of Business (FCOB)*	12	0	0.0
Dentistry	6	6	100.0
Education and Human Ecology (EHE)	31	9	29.0
Engineering	53	34	64.2
Food, Agricultural, & Environmental Sciences (FAES)	68	67	98.5
Graduate School**	242	112	46.3
Law	3	3	100.0
Medicine	28	15	53.6
Nursing	12	12	100.0
Optometry	3	1	33.3
Pharmacy	4	4	100.0
John Glenn College of Public Affairs	6	6	100.0
Public Health	5	5	100.0
Social Work	3	3	100.0
Veterinary Medicine***	3	3	100.0

*per Interim Dean Brown, FCOB did not complete assessment during the 24-25 school year
**count includes graduate programs from other colleges
***Veterinary Medicine conducted assessment of its programs and is working with IRP to formalize input into Nuventive

Appendix B: Overall findings by college

College	Criteria Met (Aspirational)	Criteria Met (Minimum)	Criteria Not Met	Inconclusive
Arts and Sciences	243	305	23	64
FCOB				
Dentistry	50	10	5	5
EHE	8	19	3	1
Engineering	30	66	1	91
FAES	382	445	108	58
Graduate School	413	313	51	142
Law	0	44	0	0
Medicine	41	75	5	1
Nursing	295	69	33	62
Optometry	0	12	2	1
Pharmacy	8	9	2	10
Public Affairs	3	5	8	1
Public Health	14	23	0	0
Social Work	24	4	0	1
Veterinary Medicine	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

*per Interim Dean Brown, FCOB did not complete assessment during the 24-25 school year
**count includes graduate programs from other colleges
***Veterinary Medicine conducted assessment of its programs and is working with IRP to formalize input into Nuventive

Appendix C: Approaches by College

Arts and Sciences:

Approach	n
Indirect - Survey (Student)	148
Direct - Other	71
Direct - Embedded testing	64
Direct - Use of Rubrics	42
Indirect - Faculty review	27

Dentistry

Approach	n
Indirect - Survey (Student)	13
Direct - Other	13
Direct - Demonstration	5
Direct - Graduate - Dissertation - Oral presentation/defense	5
Direct - Other classroom assessment methods	5

EHE

Action	n
Direct - Graduate - NON-Thesis/Fulfillment Exam - Written document	7
Direct - Graduate - NON-Thesis/Fulfillment Exam - Oral presentation/defense	3
Direct - Other culminating project	3
Direct - Graduate - Candidacy/Qualifying Examination - Oral presentation/defense	3

Engineering

Action	n
Direct - Use of Rubrics	36
Direct - Other	25
Indirect - Faculty review	18
Indirect - Job placement	15
Direct - Graduate - Dissertation - Oral presentation/defense	15

FAES

Approach	n
Direct - Other	169
Direct - Embedded testing	160
Direct - Writing assignment	142
Direct - Other classroom assessment methods	64
Direct - Other culminating project	54

Graduate School

Approach	n
Direct - Other	150
Direct - Graduate - Dissertation - Oral presentation/defense	65
Direct - Use of Rubrics	52
Indirect - Survey (Student)	46
Indirect - Faculty review	45

Law

Approach	n
Direct - Other classroom assessment methods	7
Indirect - Survey (Employer)	6
Direct - Practicum/fieldwork	6
Indirect - Survey (Student)	5
Direct - Writing assignment	5
Indirect - External program review	5

Medicine

Approach	n
Direct - Practicum/fieldwork	11
Direct - Other classroom assessment methods	7
Direct - Certification or licensure examination	6
Indirect - Survey (Student)	5
Direct - Graduate - NON-Thesis/Fulfillment Exam - Written document	5

Nursing

Approach	n
Indirect - Survey (Student)	166
Direct - Local comprehensive or proficiency examinations	38
Indirect - Survey (Alumni)	36
Direct - Other classroom assessment methods	35

Optometry

Approach	n
Direct - Demonstration	3
Indirect - Survey (Alumni)	2
Indirect - Survey (Student)	2

Pharmacy

Approach	n
Direct - Use of Rubrics	8
Direct - Graduate - NON-Thesis/Fulfillment Exam - Written document	5
Direct - Local comprehensive or proficiency examinations	5

Public Affairs

Approach	n
Indirect - Focus group	6
Indirect - Curriculum or syllabus review	5
Direct - Writing assignment	3
Direct - Other	2

Public Health

Approach	n
Direct - Other	23
Direct - Writing assignment	7

Social work

Approach	n
Direct - Embedded testing	18
Direct - Graduate - Candidacy/Qualifying Examination - Written document	4
Indirect - Survey (Student)	2
Direct - Graduate - Dissertation - Written document	2

Appendix D: Actions by College

Arts and Sciences

Action	n
Continue to monitor	621
Revisions to major program	17
Continue to collect data (small program size)	12
Changes in assessment methods	11
Course Inst. delivery/learning activities changes	8
Revisions to major program	7

Dentistry

Action	n
Continue to monitor	61
Continue to collect data (small program size)	17

EHE

Action	n
Continue to monitor	20
Other	8

Engineering

Action	n
Other	88
Continue to monitor	86

FAES

Action	n
Continue to monitor	993

Graduate School

Action	n
Continue to monitor	488
Other	98
Continue to collect data (small program size)	46

Law

Action	n
Continue to monitor	44

Medicine

Action	n
Continue to monitor	116
Changes in assessment methods	5
Course Inst. delivery/learning activities changes	5

Nursing

Action	n
Continue to monitor	98
Changes in assessment methods	18
Revisions to major program	6

Optometry

Action	n
Continue to monitor	15

Pharmacy

Action	n
Continue to monitor	20
Continue to collect data (small program size)	9
Changes in assessment methods	6

Public Affairs

Action	n
Continue to monitor	8
Course Inst. delivery/learning activities changes	6
Continue to collect data (small program size)	6
Course Inst. delivery/learning activities changes	4
Changes in assessment methods	4

Public Health

Action	n
Continue to monitor	37

Social work

Action	n
Continue to monitor	28

Appendix E: Types of Dissemination by College

Arts and Sciences

Dissemination	n
Analyze and discuss trends with the unit's faculty	462
Analyze and report to college/school	245
Shared with curriculum committee	172
Periodically confirm that current curriculum and courses are facilitating student attainment of program goals	125

Dentistry

Dissemination	n
Shared with curriculum committee	39
Shared with graduate studies committee	20
Analyze and report to college/school	18

EHE

Dissemination	n
Analyze and discuss trends with the unit's faculty	21
Other	8
Meet with students directly to discuss their performance	5
Analyze and report to accrediting organization	5

Engineering

Dissemination	n
Shared with graduate studies committee	139
Analyze and discuss trends with the unit's faculty	54

FAES

Dissemination	n
Periodically confirm that current curriculum and courses are facilitating student attainment of program goals	941
Analyze and discuss trends with the unit's faculty	940
Analyze and report to college/school	939
Shared with curriculum committee	721
Analyze and report to Graduate School/Institutional Committee	266

Graduate School

Dissemination	n
Analyze and discuss trends with the unit's faculty	533
Shared with graduate studies committee	499
Analyze and report to college/school	416
Periodically confirm that current curriculum and courses are facilitating student attainment of program goals	366
Analyze and report to Graduate School/Institutional Committee	313

Law

Dissemination	n
Analyze and discuss trends with the unit's faculty	30
Benchmark against best programs in the field	12
Periodically confirm that current curriculum and courses are facilitating student attainment of program goals	10
Meet with students directly to discuss their performance	9
Analyze and report to accrediting organization	9

Medicine

Dissemination	n
Analyze and discuss trends with the unit's faculty	108
Analyze and report to college/school	42
Meet with students directly to discuss their performance	27
Periodically confirm that current curriculum and courses are facilitating student attainment of program goals	27

Nursing

Dissemination	n
Analyze and discuss trends with the unit's faculty	199
Shared with curriculum committee	87
Periodically confirm that current curriculum and courses are facilitating student attainment of program goals	68
Shared with graduate studies committee	58
Analyze and report to college/school	58

Optometry

Dissemination	n
Analyze and report to college/school	15

Pharmacy

Dissemination	n
Analyze and report to college/school	21
Shared with curriculum committee	13
Analyze and report to college/school	8
Shared with graduate studies committee	7

Public Affairs

Dissemination	n
Shared with curriculum committee	17
Analyze and discuss trends with the unit's faculty	17
Analyze and report to college/school	17
Analyze and report to accrediting organization	11

Public Health

Dissemination	n
Analyze and discuss trends with the unit's faculty	24
Analyze and report to accrediting organization	24
Analyze and report to college/school	24
Shared with curriculum committee	24

Social work

Dissemination	n
Analyze and report to accrediting organization	19
Analyze and report to college/school	19
Analyze and report to college/school	10
Shared with curriculum committee	10