

Statement for 4.4

The use of assessment data for improvement happens on multiple levels, often with larger cross-faculty interaction and at the individual level.

At the level of the institution, assessment data has been used to augment tutoring. When AY 2013-2014 and AY 2014-2015 Lexile (reading) tests showed possible problems with freshman literacy, the Department of English and Kilohana, the Academic Success Center advocated for the purchase of 20+ laptops that would enable Kilohana to distribute computers to each student whenever an ENG 100T (freshman writing with required tutoring) class came for mandatory, weekly visits. Students could then receive one-on-one help from tutors, including how to evaluate the merits of an online article and properly cite such information in their papers.

Some colleges, such as Ka Haka 'Ula o Ke'elikōlani (College of Hawaiian Language), consider assessment as a larger group: "The results of assessments conducted . . . go through several steps of analysis. After the instructor collects the results and does an initial evaluation, the results are sent to the academic division chair, the department chair, and other coordinators of various programs (Linguistics, Kahuawaiola, Hawaiian Studies) for further analysis. Strategies based on the gathered evidence are developed by this group are then further discussed with the faculty in a college-wide meeting. The department chair and program coordinators follow up with instructors to undertake curricular or instructional changes. Assessment are redeployed with the results and the possibility of future strategies again going back through the feedback loop.

At the level of departments, chairs use assessment to facilitate group conversations and to review the overall curriculum while overseeing the quality of learning for their majors:

- "Assessment has helped us improve our curriculum is that the assessment process itself forces us to think collectively and reevaluate our teaching methods on an ongoing basis. I can't cite any ways that an assessment result induced us to make substantial changes in our curricula, but doing the writing evaluations led us to normalize our grades to make sure all members of the department were grading work of equal caliber equally. Similarly, the assessment opportunity on information literacy reminded us to emphasize these skills when we were assigning papers. Often, these small tweaks to successful pedagogical practices are more valuable than starting over with completely new teaching methods." (Department of Philosophy)
- "We are currently revising our hardware courses to meet ACM/IEEE curriculum requirements based on lower than average MFAT scores (48th percentile nationwide) for the past two years. The faculty who previously taught the course had high skills in the area, but low skills in instructional design that resulted in students not meeting learning outcomes as well as they should." (Department of Computer Science, CHNS)
- The Mathematics department assessed Line of Reasoning and Written communication in their MATH 314 Topology class Spring 2014. This class is generally taken by junior level Mathematics majors before their year-long senior classes in Real Analysis and Algebra. The MATH 314 assessment concluded that overall students completing the class were able to identify an appropriate method of proof for a given problem, use it to solve the problem, and able to adequately communicate their solution in writing. This outcome was encouraging as a number of these students had little to no formal training in mathematical proof writing before the class

(Calculus III was the only prerequisite). This assessment provided evidence that MATH 314 could be used as an alternative to MATH 310 (the historical class) as a prerequisite for senior level classes in the Mathematics curriculum. This change, among others similar to this, became part of the Mathematics program starting Fall 2019 and reduced scheduling bottlenecks with MATH 310, providing an alternative pathway to the 400 level classes. (Department of Mathematics, CNHS)

“Closing the loop” seems most effective at the level of individual faculty, including both tenure-track professors and non-tenure instructors. Both groups of faculty are encouraged to help facilitate a culture of assessment in their units:

- “The results of the writing intensive assessment from our college prompted two of us in lower division courses to decide to embed more feedbacks (more than the minimum number of feedbacks the WI certifications requires) to students written assignments in the future. Feedback will include how to synthesize theories and concepts presented from lectures. It will also include how these concepts apply to other activities they’ve done from experience or those of other practices observed in similar situations.” (Professor of Horticulture, CAFNRM)
- “I regularly conduct ‘temperature’ checks, to see how they are doing. On April 6th, 2020, I conducted a midsemester course evaluation to get a better understanding of how the conversion to online was going for students. Not surprisingly, a majority reported overwhelming feelings of stress and anxiety. Three factors that were prevalent to most of my students that were at the epicenter of this were the lack of consistency, compassion, and communication between themselves and faculty. In response, I adapted in several ways. Prior to online conversion, but more recently during online conversion, I have increasingly used software, web tools, and applications to help supplement online learning. To provide as much availability as possible, and a simple way to set up an appointment with me, I use the productivity web application Calendly for students to make Zoom appointments with me. Calendly syncs to my Google calendar, as well as my iCalendar, which offers a parsimonious way to organize my schedule. Most importantly, at the beginning of every Zoom session I now always ask two questions: 1) How are you doing today? 2) How can I help? I always follow-up with students’ responses. I shared these techniques with a colleague in the department—that individual is looking to adopt some of these practices.” (Instructor, Department of Communication)
- “Assessment helped us ensure written communication as a minimum core competency in our major. After the first assessment, MUS 465 was reconfigured and certified for WI with students completed writing assignments weekly throughout the semester. An unexpected benefit was that students majoring in Hawaiian Studies enrolled in the course and provided critical analysis of the connection between opera and chant. Both Performing Arts and Hawaiian studies majors are both equally meeting our standards of writing.” (Instructor, Department of Performing Arts)

Statement prepared by:

Seri I. Luangphinit, ALO

Norman Q. Arancon, Professor of Horticulture, CAFNRM

Jason “Iota” Cabral, Associate Professor of Hawaiian Language, KHUOK

Karla Hayashi, Director of Kilohana
Amy Horst, Instructor of Music, Department of Performing Arts
Christopher Lauer, Chair of Philosophy
Colby Y. Miyose, Instructor of Communication, CAS
Lauri Sagle, Composition Director, Department of English
Brian Wissman, Chair of Mathematics

October 2020