Course Assessment Committee Report for Fall 2024 Data Collection

April 3, 2025

Executive Summary

- The long-term, but very slight downward trend in response rates that began after the Fall 2022 data collection cycle peaked at 89% was broken with the Fall 2024 data collection cycle. Response rates rebounded to 86% which matched Spring 2023 for the second-highest response rate. Both the trend and overall percentage of respondents are both positives.
- While the overall response rate remains high, discussions are ongoing with college leadership to better leverage the support of supervisors, deans, and other administrative personnel to help increase the response rate. Additionally, we have identified chronic non-responders, and these individuals will receive additional focus and support moving forward. It is possible, with these changes, to eclipse the previous high-water mark of an 89% response rate and possibly eclipse 90%.
- The continued high response rate might also mark an opportunity to expand employee education beyond instructional, didactic Cougar TALEs the committee has traditionally produced each fall. Such a type of presentation focusing on the basic mechanics of course assessment reporting can be pre-recorded, creating an opportunity for a workshop/lab or more hands-on type of approach to employee education by the committee.
- Data are inconclusive at this time, but this year's pool of students these data were based on was the smallest in terms of total students assessed, average class size, and median class size. This may simply be a one-off, but if it continues it may represent a trend where, perhaps, after multiple years of reporting, instructors are reporting less often from larger enrollment general education classes and perhaps smaller enrollment classes. While this is neither good or bad, it still bears monitoring in the future, especially as formalized general education assessment reporting comes 'online' across the college.
- While traditional, summative assessments in the form of capstone assignments or cumulative finals continue to be utilized, only a minority of instructors reported using this approach to assess their given competency (40%). Much more common were instructors who reported using more formative approaches through assessments administered during the regular course of class via either regular assignments (71%) or regular quizzes/exams (52%). Almost half (48%) of respondents also reported another

form of formative assessment approach in the form of in-class demonstrations or observations as well. This split between formative and summative assessments may be a result of the timetable for reporting course assessments (Finals week ends right before the deadline for course reporting), but it may also be a genuine case of instructors preferring that form of assessment. This may represent a possible avenue for further study.

- While many (30%) instructors reported no changes needed to their assessment tool, a majority did report planning on changing their assessment tool or approach, with one of the most common approaches being either adding or revising rubrics.

Introduction

The Fall 2024 data collection cycle for course assessment and improvement marked the ninth time any data had been collected since the pilot began, the seventh data collection cycle using the current biannual data collection structure and the third data collection cycle since data were collected at the end of the semester respondents were asked to report upon rather than retroactively.

Fall 2024 Data Collection

Instrument

The Fall 2024 data collection instrument was an updated version of the Microsoft Form that the Course Assessment Committee has used to collect data since the initial college-wide data collection period in Fall 2021. However, periodically, minor adjustments have been made to the Form based on committee decisions and faculty feedback. As a result of these periodic edits, the Fall 2024 Form ended up as a 12-item instrument, as it also was in Spring 2024. While periodic adjustments are necessary, as the committee has continued in its work adjustments have become more minor and more infrequent, better enabling year-to-year and semester-to-semester comparisons. Future revisions might still become necessary, but, for the foreseeable future, the current 12-item instrument will remain the instrument.

One-third of the items were demographic or descriptive of the instructor and the class they were reporting on while the other two thirds were focused on their competency on which instructors were reporting, adjustments to improve student learning, and how learning was assessed. Half of these items had open-ended response options while the other half were categorical, close-ended responses.

Data Collection

At the outset of the Fall 2024 data collection cycle, the Committee accessed the Fall 2024 Scheduling Matrix in PowerBI to create an initial pool of all instructors who were listed in Fall 2024 scheduling matrix. From that initial pool of instructors, those who were listed on the matrix for administrative purposes only, instructors who were no longer teaching for Barton by the end of the data collection period, as well as any other instructors who were able to explain why they should be

exempted on a case-by-case basis (e.g. course was more a practicum than a traditional college course) were exempted from the pool of instructors required to submit a course assessment report. That final roster of instructors was then used as the basis for a series of emails soliciting their course assessment reports.

Although instructors are allowed to submit assessment reports early, primary Fall 2024 course assessment reports were solicited from November 22 through December 15, with late submissions also accepted through January 7, 2025. A broadcast/mass email was sent to all instructors listed as instructors in the Fall 2024 scheduling matrix the Friday before Thanksgiving. Personalized/individualized email reminders were then sent to all those who had not responded by Friday December 6th and Friday, December 13th. Finally, a last-chance reminder email was sent the first week of January for all those who missed the December 15th deadline to submit their report. The Form was initially closed to new responses on Sunday, January 5th, but the deadline was ultimately extended out to Tuesday, January 7th due to inclement weather and campus closures the first week of January.

Data Analysis

Once the Microsoft Form was closed, all data were synced with and then downloaded to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. These raw data where then cleaned to remove duplicate or invalid responses (e.g., course taught outside the Fall time frame). Frequencies were then computed for all categorical data as were basic descriptive statistics, such as means and medians (where appropriate). For open-ended responses, the committee chair used qualitative analysis to identify common themes and patterns in the open-ended responses.

Results

Fall 2024 Data Collection

The final Fall 2024 instructor pool included 244 names, 29 of whom were exempted, leaving a total participant pool of 215 names. Of these 215, 184 participants submitted valid responses for a response rate of 86%. This represents the highest response rate since Fall 2022 and a reversal of the slight downward trend in response rates dating back to Fall 2022. Since the initial low response rate of 70% in Spring 2022, response rates have been 80% five semesters in a row and above 85% 3 of the five semesters (Table 1). At this point, the data collection process and overall awareness at the college appears sufficient to maintain these high response rates.

Table 1: Respondent Characteristics

	Responded (n)	Potential Respondents (n)	% Respondents
Fall 2024 Instructors	184	215	86%
Spring 2024 Instructors	180	219	82%
Fall 2023 Instructors	192	229	83%
Spring 2023 Instructors	175	204	86%
Fall 2022 Instructors	198	221	89%
Spring 2022 Instructors	159	228	70%

The total number of students assessed for Fall 2024 was 2115, which was the lowest number of students assessed since Spring of 2022 and more than 10% below the total number of students assessed both the prior semester (Spring 2024) or year-to-year (Fall 2023). Fall 2024 also saw a similar drop in both the mean number of students assessed per course (M=11.8) as well as the median (M=9). While all these drops are greater than 10% deductions from prior semesters, this is a descriptive statistic primarily and not necessarily of significance, at least at this point in time. However, it will bear monitoring in the future and a continued shift in this statistic might indicate an overall shift away from instructors reporting on larger enrollment general education courses and moving towards reporting towards smaller enrollment courses (Table 2).

Table 2: Students Assessed

Total	N	Mean	Median
Fall 2024	2115	11.8	9
Spring 2024	2429	13.6	10
Fall 2023	2567	13.7	11
Spring 2023	2498	14.1	10
Fall 2022	3019	15.8	10
Spring 2022	2348	15.8	12

Specific Course Competencies

Overall, 181 of the 184 instructors (98%) provided the specific competency they were reporting on. Respondents were also asked to self-report which level of Bloom's taxonomy their competency addressed. Six of the 181 respondents indicated they either could not identify their Bloom's verb or that their competency did not have a Bloom's verb, leaving 175 valid responses. The most common Bloom's level addressed was level 2, 'Understand', with 25% of respondents reporting an 'Understand' level competency. The majority of all respondents, 62%, reported a competency from one of three lowest Bloom's levels. This was in keeping with the prior data collection period, when 63% of respondents reported from one of the lowest three Bloom's levels for their competencies (Table 3).

Table 3: Competencies by Bloom's Level

	Fall 2024		Spring 2024	
Total (N= 175, 181)	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Level 1 (Remember)	23	13%	19	12%
Level 2 (Understand)	44	25%	30	18%
Level 3 (Apply)	43	24%	54	33%
Level 4 (Analyze)	29	17%	26	16%
Level 5 (Evaluate)	24	14%	24	15%
Level 6 (Create)	12	7%	13	8%

While respondents were asked to self-identify the Bloom's verb for their selected competency using a categorical response item, they were also asked to report the competency they were reporting on verbatim. Examples of typical competencies by Bloom's verb level groupings are included below:

Remember and Understand:

- *"Identify the function, operation, and maintenance of mobile equipment used in the beef cattle industry."*
- *"Describe the foundations, development, and features of the U.S. Constitution."*
- *"Describe the findings of Zimbardo's Stanford Prison experiment."*
- *"List and define the factors affecting the soil environment."*
- *"Describe positive mental and physical health behaviors designed to reduce both short-term and long-term risks."*

- *“Understand the significant impact on American life by the women’s movement, gender justice, and challenges to achieving full equality.”*
- *“Explain good internet usage to maintain privacy and security.”*
- *“Distinguish between task orientation of grieving from a stage orientation stage of grieving.”*

Apply and Analyze:

- *“Develop a high degree of understanding and skill in effective oral communication.”*
- *“Apply the supply and demand model for economic analysis.”*
- *“Design personal academic plan.”*
- *“Demonstrate an understanding of common network management tasks.”*
- *“Produce a portfolio of work showing movement toward an understanding of the elements of craft for assessment.”*
- *“Analyze nutrition information from the media and makers of supplements.”*
- *“Distinguish between major and minor key signatures.”*
- *“Correlate abnormal results with the most likely disease process by determining the clinical significance of the findings.”*

Evaluate and Create:

- *“Evaluate writing in terms of rhetorical purpose, voice and tone, content, development, and documentation.”*
- *“Evaluate paragraphs for logical presentation and complete development during revision.”*
- *“Collect, evaluate and interpret qualitative and quantitative data from laboratory procedures in a productive and meaningful manner. 8- Carry out suitable calculations with quantitative data, recognizing when data and calculations are within reasonable range.”*

- *“Compose sentences that clearly express the author’s ideas.”*
- *“Create a complete VFR flight plan for a simulated flight.”*
- *“Write a one-page essay in Spanish about himself/herself.”*

In order to support an ongoing effort to utilize data effectively, respondents were also asked to report whether or not they had empirical data to support the competency they chose to report on. The majority of respondents (58%) indicated they had empirical data on which to base their competency adjustments. This figure was very similar to the 57% that reported they had empirical data on for the Spring 2024 assessment. Nearly a third (30%) indicated they did not have empirical data on which to base their competency adjustments while the remaining 12% expressed uncertainty whether or not they had empirical data on which to base their competency adjustments. Of those who indicated they had empirical data, 95 (91%) gave a specific percentage of students who had met that competency level to their satisfaction. Overall, the average competency identified as needing improvement had a pass rate of 61%, which was just slightly below the average pass rate of 63% reported by instructors for the Spring 2024 reporting period.

Course Adjustments

Instructors were asked about the adjustments they planned to make to their courses in a couple of different ways. First, instructors were asked to complete a categorical variable listing types of changes they planned to make. Instructors could provide as many different categories on these items as they saw fit. Then, instructors were asked to provide an open-ended response explaining exactly what adjustments they planned to make in more specific detail.

One hundred eighty-three (183) of the 184 (99%) respondents provided an answer to the question about course adjustments. Of those 183, 174 (95%) selected at least one category/type of change the intended to make to their courses. Of these 174, the average number of different types of adjustments was 1.95 per respondent. This represented a slight increase from the average 1.86 different types of adjustments per instructor for the Spring 2024 data collection period.

The most common type of change respondents indicated they planned to make was either changing or adding new assignments (48%), followed closely by adding new materials or resources

to their courses (45%). While the order of the top two types of change reversed from Spring 2024 to Fall 2024, adding assignments and adding resources were also the top two categories in Spring 2024 (Table 4).

Table 4: Adjustments to Improve Student Learning

	Fall 2024		Spring 2024	
Types of Adjustments	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Changing or adding assignments	88	48%	73	41%
Adding new materials/resources	83	45%	85	48%
Adjusting time/attention given to competency	72	39%	79	45%
Adding videos/multimedia	55	30%	49	28%
Removing old/outdated materials	23	13%	13	7%
Changing the order materials are covered	15	8%	17	10%
Other	9	5%	13	7%

In addition to the close-ended item asking respondents to broadly categorize the types of changes they planned to make; they were also able to provide full descriptions of their planned changes using an open-ended response item. From these data, adding new resources or materials on the instruction side or adjusting assignments on the student-end were also the most common responses. Typical responses from instructors planning to adding new instructional materials are included below:

- *“I have started filming introduction videos for each module. I am creating a PowerPoint/guided notes to go along with the video. So for the competency "1-Identify the political, economic, and social causes of the First World War," I will have a video with a PowerPoint and guided notes that will better introduce the causes of World War I and help students organize the causes of WWI as they read the book for the course and watch the documentaries.”*
- *“I want to add additional content to hit more points and show the background information as well.”*
- *“Instead of simply STATING that online encyclopedias, such as Britannica and Wikipedia aren't usually acceptable scholarly source, I will go in further depth to explain why. My hope is this will bring more attention to the issue instead of being something the student glances by.”*
- *“I want to add additional content to hit more points and show the background information as well.”*
- *“I plan to rewrite the section discussing the evaluation of calculating a criminal history score and how it affects the sentencing grid. I plan to add multiple examples of current and historical cases and demonstrate the differences.”*
- *“I plan to include supplemental materials that clearly depicts Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (to clear up confusion with textbook visual).”*
- *“Now with the new Ag Complex and the opportunity to develop a teaching farm, use it to demonstrate these factors. And use an outdoor lab.”*
- *I plan on adding extra repertoire pieces that assess that specific competency, in order to allow students with weaker music background to successfully meet the standards of learning and performing a piece at the piano by the end of the term.”*

Closely related to adding additional instructional material is adjusting assignments or student assessment tied to the instructor's selected competency. Typical responses from instructors who indicated they needed to focus on adding new assignments or activities are included below:

- *"I plan to include two more enrichment activities for creating original compound and complex sentences if formative assessment results suggest that more activity is warranted."*
- *"I plan to adjust in class hands on exercises and focus on essay data research to ingrain key competencies within their daily lives."*
- *"I plan to add additional discussion and competency activities to more fully cover meeting resident's needs."*
- *"I plan to add more activities that require students to draft thesis statements."*
- *"I plan on having them create a diagram using old school colored pencils (or other) and uploading a picture of it for grading."*
- *"Plan to focus more activities to putting answers into engineering notation (natural gas notation, powers of 3)."*
- *"I plan to add an additional experiment so that the students can have some additional time applying stoichiometry calculations."*

Assessment Tool Adjustments

The final set of items included both a categorical item to allow respondents to report broad categories of how they assess student learning as well as an open-ended item allowing them to more fully describe how they assess student learning. Overall, 183 respondents indicated which tools they used to assess student learning. The average respondent reported using 2.44 different methods to assess student learning, up slightly from the 2.34 assessment methods per respondent in Spring 2024. Like the Spring, respondents were most likely to indicate they assessed their reported competency via regular in-class assignments (71%). This was followed by normal quizzes/exam administered during the course (52%), demonstrating or observing students (48%) and a final or cumulative exam administered at the end of class or during Finals week (40%) (Table 5).

Table 5: Assessing Student Learning

	Fall 2024		Spring 2024	
Types of Adjustments	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Regular in-class assignments	130	71%	120	67%
Regular in-class quizzes/exams	96	52%	97	54%
Student demonstrations/observations	88	48%	75	42%
Final/Cumulative exam	73	40%	67	37%
Capstone/Final project	50	27%	50	28%
Other/No set method	1	1%	3	2%
None of the above	10	5%	6	3%

In addition to being asked how they currently assess students on their selected competency, instructors also reported what, if any, changes they planned to make to their assessment tool moving forward. A majority of respondents (56%) indicated they planned to make at least some change to their assessment tool or approach moving forward. Nearly a third (31%) reported they planned to make no changes to their current assessment tool or approach. The remaining 13% gave an answer that was literally 'not applicable' or 'N/A' or did not complete the open-ended item at all. Among those who reported planned changes, three common types of responses emerged: 1) Adding rubrics, 2) clarifying instructions, and 3) revising regular assignments. Very few comments focused on changing final projects, final exams, or other such summative assessments. Comments typical of those adding or revising rubrics are included below:

- *“I plan to expand my speech grading rubric for more detailed analysis of research sources.”*
- *“Rubrics are posted with assignments. However, I plan to incorporate rubric expectations into my weekly emails that are sent regarding assignments.”*
- *“A rubric needs added for essay, and essay will be in the form of a paper.”*
- *“A rubric will be used to assess students with additional activities added to course.”*
- *“Plan to beta test a specific "active engagement" rubric and utilize and more frequent intervals.”*
- *Rubrics need an adjustment across the board. I hope to implement some VALUE rubrics for relevant assignments.*
- *I need to separate a portion of my rubric into two sections instead of one. I think it will be more effective for the students to understand what they need to improve on..*

The second major theme that emerged from respondents open-ended comments centered on clarifying instructions or otherwise improving the validity of what their course assessment tools we measuring to ensure no ‘false’ results of misunderstanding directions/the assignment vs not actually mastering the competency itself. Comments typical of those types of adjustments are included below:

- *“Need to update each assignment and lab submission to include specific instructions on how/where to place name in permanent marker, and what consequences are of not following those instructions.”*
- *“I think the tool is solid, but its usefulness depends on the ability of the user to follow directions and consistently input the data. I will build in more class time to demonstrate and be available for immediate feedback while students are entering their information.”*
- *“I may adjust the wording of the tool, based on feedback, to be sure I am being clear in my delivery.”*
- *“I want to revise the Interactive Student Content, to make the process more clear to the students.”*

The final major theme that emerged were more rudimentary, but still important, revisions to day-in-day-out regular assignments. Comments typical of instructors who planned to make some of these micro-level changes to their assessment approach are included below:

- *“I need to have the students complete an example problem to demonstrate their understanding of simple vs. compound interest and how it relates to the time value of money. This may be more effective than asking them to explain the concept. They would be demonstrating their understanding vs. explaining.”*
- *“I would like to move away from the business letter concept and have students use the software create either more personalized letters with correct formatting or cover letters and resumes.”*
- *“Add specific questions to that week's assignments about the Stanford Prison Experiment, which should align with Bloom's Taxonomy outcomes for the 'Remember' section.”*
- *“Rather than solely relying on a research paper (as I did this semester), we are going to work on brief assignments with research: Scavenger Hunt, Annotated Bibliography, Assess a paper that has already been written, quiz students of the anatomy of an MLA set of citations.”*

Conclusion

The Fall 2024 data collection reporting period represented the second consecutive semester in which respondents were asked to report at the end of the current semester rather than reporting retroactively and the first complete cycle (Spring/Fall) with this new approach to data collection. While response rates dipped slightly in Spring 2024, they rebounded in Fall 2024 which indicated the data collection change appears to be sustainable.

In addition to maintaining strong response rates, instructors continue to providing increasingly high quality data. Most respondents (58%) had empirical data to back up their course assessment reporting, which was similar to the 57% who reported the same in Spring 2024. While a majority is good, it should be a future goal of the assessment committee to perhaps increase this percentage

and make sure as many faculty as possible are making their connections between their quantitative assessment data and the adjustments to student learning they ultimately make.

Finally, the last major takeaway from this cycle's report is the continuing diversity of assessment approaches instructors continue to employ. Building a culture of assessment remains a guiding principle of the course assessment committee and while high response rates to this survey are one indicator that such a culture is taking hold, so is the variety of different approaches instructors take to assess student learning. While traditional pre- and post-course summative approaches still hold some value, assessment ceases to be a usable tool for instructors if they do not feel able to adapt different assessment approaches to meet their unique needs and approaches. At a college with multiple physical locations, workforce development courses, academic courses, and military courses, it would be alarming if faculty felt compelled to use a one-size fits all approach to assessment. Fortunately, at least 25% of instructors reported using five different categories or types of assessments and the average instructor reported using nearly two and a half assessment methods on the single competency for which they were reporting. All in all, this suggests a strong culture is in place that the committee can continue to build upon moving forward.

Course Assessment Committee Report for Spring 2025 Data Collection

October 17, 2025

Executive Summary

- Following a small, but steady downward trend in response rates, we have now seen two consecutive increases in response rates. The Spring 2025 reporting period not only represented an improvement (92% vs 86%) from the Fall 2024 data collection period but also represented an all-time high response rate for Course Assessment, topping the previous high of 89%. An 80% response rate has been the goal of the Course Assessment committee for three years/six data collection cycles, so 92% is an outstanding achievement and may even warrant an upward adjustment of the response rate goal. While maintaining a 90% response rate moving forward might be a challenge, it, nonetheless, represents a laudable goal for the Course Assessment committee and reflects a strong culture of assessment that Barton is helping to foster.
- Related to the response rate data from this data collection cycle, the Fall 2024 report called for capitalizing on closer communication and coordination with college leadership and administration, including the Vice President of Instruction, deans, supervisors, and executive directors. The coordination strategy worked out with college leadership and the course assessment committee doubtlessly deserves a large share of the credit for being able to achieve an over 90% response rate in this data collection cycle. As such, this communication and coordination with college leadership and the course assessment committee should continue.
- Part of the larger goal of assessment in general at Barton as to 'create a culture of assessment.' While this laudable goal isn't the easiest to measure directly, it does show up in related indicators, such as the number of adjustments the average instructor reported planning on making to their courses. With a healthy culture of assessment in place at an institution, instructors should feel like they have a plethora of options to choose from in order to best assess and adjust their courses. Based on the average number of adjustments per instructor rising from 1.86, to 1.92, and to 2.12 over the last three data collection cycles, this suggests a healthy culture of assessment is taking root at Barton and instructors are feeling increasingly comfortable using as many 'tools' as they need to help improve student learning from course to course.
- In addition to demonstrating a freedom to use multiple methods to assess student learning, instructors also reported a freedom and a willingness to modify their assessment tool itself. The majority of respondents not only indicated plans to alter their course delivery, but also to close the data loop and modify their assessment tool

as well. While changes to course delivery are the obvious top-line response, it is heartening that the less obvious need to focus on the assessment tool itself also appears to be well-rooted in the Barton faculty.

- Finally, in keeping with the theme of this report that all indications show a thriving and growing culture of assessment, all other indicators of instructors embracing assessment culture were up as well. For the third straight reporting cycle: 1) the average number of faculty reporting that they had empirical data to back up the course adjustments increased, 2) The average number of different types of adjustments instructors planned to make to their courses increased, and 3) the number of different assessment tools used by instructors to assess student learning increased.
- The largest threat that appears to exist right now to the culture of assessment is complacency. The work, training, partnerships, and communication necessary to achieve a 90%+ response rate, to have instructors using multiple assessment tools, etc. needs to continue in order to maintain all of the different successes documented in this report.

Introduction

The Spring 2025 data collection cycle for course assessment and improvement marked the 10th time data have been collected since the pilot began, the 8th data collection cycle using the current biannual data collection structure and the 4th data collection cycle in which respondents were asked to report their data in 'real time' as of their current semester ended or immediately thereafter rather than retroactively.

Spring 2025 Data Collection

Instrument

The Spring 2025 data collection instrument was an updated version of the Microsoft Form that the Course Assessment Committee has used to collect data since the initial college-wide data collection period in Fall 2021. In its current form, the instrument is a 12-item instrument and has used the current 12-item arrangement for three data collection cycles in a row.

Of the 12 items, one-third (n=4) are demographic or descriptive questions about the instructor and the class they were reporting on. These items include questions such as the number of students assessed, instructor name, and course title. The remaining eight items were specific to the competency the instructor was reporting on and what adjustments were being made to improve student learning. Of these eight items, half (n=4) were categorical, close-ended questions and the other half were open-ended responses. This approach allows for both a quantitative and qualitative assessment of the improvements being made by instructors each semester.

Data Collection

All individuals listed as instructors in the Spring 2025 Scheduling Matrix in PowerBI were identified as the pool of eligible respondents. From that initial universe of instructors, three conditions could be used to exempt an instructor from submitting a Course assessment report: 1) individuals who self-reported that they were listed on the matrix for administrative purposes only, 2) instructors who were no longer teaching for Barton by the end of the data collection period, and 3) on a case-by-case basis, any other instructors who were able to explained why they should be exempted (e.g. course was more a practicum than a traditional college course). Anyone who did not receive an exemption based on those three criteria was then included in the final instructor pool.

Although instructors are allowed to submit assessment reports early, Spring 2025 course assessment reports were actively solicited from April 28 through May 11, 2025, with an initial deadline of May 15 set for Spring 2025 course assessment report submission. After an initial blanket request for report submissions to all eligible faculty, as many as two additional targeted reminder emails were sent to faculty who had not yet submitted a report by May 1st and May 8th. While the primary data collection period ended in May, the Microsoft Form remained open through the summer months and a final reminder to faculty was sent out in August when full-time faculty reported back to work for the 2025-26 school year. These 'last-chance' course assessment reports were accepted through August 24th. The dataset was then closed to further submissions at that time and downloaded for data analysis.

Data Analysis

Following the closure of the data collection window on August 24th, all responses from the Microsoft Form were downloaded to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet for data cleaning and analysis. Raw responses were checked to remove invalid responses (e.g., course taught outside the Fall time frame) as well as duplicate responses. When duplicate responses were found, the most recent, complete submission was used and the duplicate submission(s) was/were deleted. Once the data were cleaned, frequency percentages and basic descriptive statistics (e.g. mean, median) were computed for all categorical variables. For open-ended responses, the committee chair used qualitative analysis techniques to identify common themes and patterns in the open-ended responses.

Results

Spring 2025 Data Collection

The final Spring 2025 instructor pool included 233 names, 21 of whom were exempted, leaving a total participant pool of 212 names. Of these 215, 195 participants submitted valid responses for an effective response rate of 92%. This figure not only represents the highest response rate, it also represents the first time the response rate has eclipsed 90%. This response rate also builds on a trend that began in Fall 2024 of an improving response rate after three consecutive semesters of declining response rates that began in Spring of 2023. Since the initial low response rate of 70% in Spring 2022, response rates have been 82% or higher six semesters in a row and at or above 86% three of the six prior semesters (Table 1).

Table 1: Respondent Characteristics

	Responded (n)	Potential Respondents (n)	% Respondents
Spring 2025 Instructors	195	212	92%
Fall 2024 Instructors	184	215	86%
Spring 2024 Instructors	180	219	82%
Fall 2023 Instructors	192	229	83%
Spring 2023 Instructors	175	204	86%
Fall 2022 Instructors	198	221	89%
Spring 2022 Instructors	159	228	70%

The total number of students assessed for Spring 2025 was 2698, which was the highest number of students assessed since the Fall 2022 semester and the second highest total ever. This figure also marked a departure from a general downward trend in the number of students assessed that began in Fall of 2023. In addition to an increase in the number of total students, the mean number of students assessed per instructor rose from 11.8 in Fall 2024 to 13.8 for Spring 2025. This mean of 13.8 was the highest mean since the Spring of 2023 (Table 2).

Table 2: Students Assessed

Total	N	Mean	Median
Spring 2025	2698	13.8	10
Fall 2024	2115	11.8	9
Spring 2024	2429	13.6	10
Fall 2023	2567	13.7	11
Spring 2023	2498	14.1	10
Fall 2022	3019	15.8	10
Spring 2022	2348	15.8	12

Specific Course Competencies

Overall, 192 of the 195 instructors (98%) provided the specific verbiage for the competency they chose to reporting on. Respondents were also asked to self-report which level of Bloom's taxonomy their competency addressed. Nearly all respondents (n=194) self-assessed their Bloom's competency level, including two who did not provide the competency verbiage itself. However, of those 194, 5% (n=10) self-reported that either their competency did not include a Bloom's verb or they were unsure which Bloom's level their competency was at, resulting in a total valid N of 184 respondents identifying one of the six Bloom's levels.

Like the Fall 2024 data collection cycle, when 62% identified one of the three lower Bloom's levels, most Spring 2025 (63%) respondents also identified one of the lower three Bloom's levels for their competency. Also mirroring Fall 2024, the most common level of Bloom's taxonomy identified (27%) was the third level, apply, followed by the second level, understand (22%). While the overall pattern of responses was remarkably similar over the prior two data collection cycles, there was a slight growth between Fall 2024 (21%) and Spring 2025 (23%) in respondents choosing to report on one of the two highest levels ('evaluate' and 'create') of Blooms' taxonomy (Table 3).

Table 3: Competencies by Bloom's Level

	Spring 2025		Fall 2024	
Total (N= 175, 181)	**n**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Level 1 (Remember)	26	14%	23	13%
Level 2 (Understand)	40	22%	44	25%
Level 3 (Apply)	49	27%	43	24%
Level 4 (Analyze)	26	14%	29	17%
Level 5 (Evaluate)	28	15%	24	14%
Level 6 (Create)	15	8%	12	7%

Respondents were also asked to report their competency verbiage verbatim. Typical responses from these responses are included below by three different tiers (Levels 1-2, Levels 3-4, and Levels 5-6) of Bloom's taxonomy.

Remember and Understand:

- *"Describe the basic tissues of the body and their location and explain their functions."*
- *"Identify factors that tend to hold down voter turnout."*
- *"Identify and describe the elements of melody, harmony, pitch, rhythm, timbre, texture, form, and dynamics."*
- *"Explain the four ways in which an agency may be created."*
- *"Calculate perimeter, area and volume of geometric objects."*
- *"Understand the need for documentation of outside source material."*
- *"Describe the steps of mitosis in terms of what is happening with the chromosomes during each phase."*

Apply and Analyze:

- *“Analyze the U.S. Army’s Nine Principles of War in relation to historical battles in American Military history.”*
- *“Find the inverse of a function.”*
- *“Read a tape measure to a minimum of 1/16th of an inch or 1 mm.”*
- *“Prepare financial statements from business transactions.”*
- *“Design personal academic plan.”*
- *“Compose essays that meet the standards of college-level writing.”*
- *“Create graphs that relate pairs of astronomical data, such as frequency and wavelength of light, temperature and luminosity of stars, or angular size and distance.”*
- *“Analyze nutrition information from the media and makers of supplements.”*
- *“Explain the concepts of social categories, status, role, role expectation, role strain, and role conflict.”*

Evaluate and Create:

- *“Recognize and assess a medical emergency.”*
- *“Compare each religion’s principles in order to locate their similarities.”*
- *“Demonstrate ability to access keyboarding software.”*
- *“Evaluate the impact of the Mali Empire on the Western World.”*
- *“Evaluate one’s own writing in terms of rhetorical purpose, voice and tone, content development, structure, surface errors, and documentation. Implement revisions accordingly.”*
- *“Develop a management plan for an entrepreneurial venture.”*

Empirical Data

In addition to reporting the competency they wished to address, respondents were also asked to support their choice of course competency to address by providing empirical data. Using a categorical response item, the majority of respondents (61%) indicated they had empirical data on which to base their competency adjustments. This figure is consistent with, as well as a slight upward tick to the 58% that reported they had categorical data in Fall 2024 and the 57% that reported they had empirical data on for the Spring 2024 assessment.

The remaining respondents either indicated they did not have empirical data (28%), they were unsure if they had empirical data (12%) or did not answer the question at all (1%) Among those who reported their empirical data, the mean percentage of students meet the competency was 69%. This was a slightly higher 'pass' rate for the competencies instructors reported on in both Fall 2024 (61%) and Spring 2024 (63%).

Course Adjustments

Beyond reporting on the competency they were seeking to adjust, instructors were also asked to explain the nature of the adjustments they wished to make to improve student learning. Instructors were asked to complete a categorical variable listing different common types of changes they planned to make (instructors could provide as many different categories on these items as they saw fit.) Instructors were also asked to provide qualitative data as well and explain their planned course adjustments using an open-ended questionnaire item.

The vast majority of respondents (192 of 195) provided an open-ended description of the course adjustments they planned to make based on their competency data. Of those 192, 178 (93%) selected at least one category/type of change the intended to make to their courses. Of these 178, the average number of different types of adjustments was 2.12 per respondent. This 2.12 average represented an uptick from Fall 2024 (1.95) and Spring 2024 (1.86)

The most common type of change respondents indicated they planned to make was adjusting the time or attention devoted to a given competency (47%) as well as adding new course materials of resources for students (47%). Following closely behind, 45% of respondents indicated plans to change or add assignments to the course the next time it was taught. While this largely mirrored the Fall 2024 results, adjusting time or attention to a given topic was only listed by 39% of respondents in Fall 2024 as was just the third most common response in Spring 2025 (Table 4).

Table 4: Adjustments to Improve Student Learning

	Spring 2025		Fall 2024	
Types of Adjustments	**n**	**%**	**N**	**%**
Adjusting time/attention given to competency	92	47%	72	39%
Adding new materials/resources	92	47%	83	45%
Changing or adding assignments	88	45%	88	48%
Adding videos/multimedia	51	26%	55	30%
Removing old/outdated materials	22	11%	23	13%
Changing the order materials are covered	14	7%	15	8%
Other	13	7%	9	5%

Respondents were also given the opportunity to move beyond the close-ended categorical item and provide long-form open-ended descriptions of their planned course adjustments. While these open-ended responses were not necessarily bound to the categories of the close-ended question, response patterns did mirror those same categories. Typical responses from these categories by broad topic are included below:

Time and Attention:

- *"I plan to add additional time and support to cover the process of this competency."*
- *"We plan to add more in depth study and rubrics to the pharmacology section of the AEMT course."*

- *“I will add that triage needs to be completed in scenarios within the first few minutes and give them more of a range of calls not just serious calls but a variety to make sure they are triaging accurately.”*
- *“I plan to add more dynamic assignments with the use of H5P tool and reinforce in-class review and student participation at the beginning of each session.”*
- *“I plan to spend more time covering logistics with classroom activities and discussions.”*

New Materials/Resources:

- *“I plan to add additional activity from the text book that emphasizes how to write introductions.”*
- *“I plan on adding more example on different lifting techniques”*
- *“I will be updating the instrument on personal altruism. This will be by checking with the authors and/or adding a couple of my own items.”*
- *“Add a summary of several new forms of literary criticism to the course.”*

Changing or Adding Assignments:

- *“I plan to add an additional assignment to two classes so that we are spending more time on the content.”*
- *“I spend to have more in class activities where students can differentiate the different types of property crimes. I will give them more hypothetical situations to determine the crime that took place.”*
- *“I plan to increase in-class participation to strengthen students’ analytical skills by incorporating active-learning exercises—such as evidence-based debates, interactive timeline workshops, and rapid-fire analysis rounds—that require them to engage directly with historical materials and with one another.”*
- *“I will present the lessons about complex sentences, run-ons, and fragments earlier in the semester. I will also add a requirement to use complex sentences in some of the writing assignments throughout the semester.”*

All Other Adjustments (Video, Removing Old, Changing Order):

- *"I have many videos but I plan to create a visual chart that presents clearly the different research methods."*
- *"I plan to add an additional current example to keep the assignment fresh and relevant."*
- *"I plan on rerecording the lectures this summer to hopefully better address the subject matter and the tests, while still hopefully keeping the length down to a succinct level. In doing so may add additional materials in the video along side the power point and narration to help aid the students, and upload those files individually as well."*
- *"We are changing textbooks this summer and will need to redo all assignments for Fall 2025."*

Assessment Tool Adjustments

The final set of items on the Course Assessment questionnaire focus on the assessment tool(s) respondents used for their data. The questionnaire included both a categorical item to allow respondents to report broad categories of how they assess student learning as well as an open-ended item allowing them to more fully describe how they assess student learning. Overall, using the categorical variable, all 195 respondents indicated which tool(s) they used to assess student learning. Respondents were most likely to report their assessment data was based on regular in-class assignments (72%), followed by regular quizzes or exams (48%), and a final/cumulative exam (39%). While the top two categories remained the same from Fall 2024 to Spring 2025, observation/student demonstrations (48%) rather than final/cumulative exam was third most common. The average respondent reported using 2.50 different methods to assess student learning, up slightly from the 2.44 average reported in Fall 2024 and the 2.34 average reported in Spring 2024 (Table 5).

Table 5: Assessing Student Learning

	Spring 2025		Fall 2024	
Types of Adjustments	**n**	**%**	**n**	**%**
Regular in-class assignments	140	72%	130	71%
Regular in-class quizzes/exams	94	48%	96	52%
Final/Cumulative exam	76	39%	73	40%
Student demonstrations/observations	69	36%	88	48%
Capstone/Final project	62	32%	50	27%
Other/No set method	2	1%	1	1%
None of the above	4	2%	10	5%

Respondents were also asked to look forward to any potential changes they might make to their assessment tool(s) moving forward using an open-ended response option. Nearly all the 195 respondents (n=191) provided information on potential changes they planned to possibly make to their assessment tool(s) moving forward. A majority of those 191 respondents, 58%, indicated they planned to make at least some changes to their assessment tool(s) for future class offerings. Just over a quarter of respondents (26%) indicated their assessment tool(s) were sufficient as is. The remaining 16% of respondents either gave a response that was neither a reported change to their assessment tool(s) or a statement that no changes were required.

Respondents were also allowed to describe the exact nature of the adjustments to their assessment tool(s) they planned to make. From these open-ended responses, several common themes or broad categories of responses emerged. These three broad themes included a focus on improving instructions, directions or question wording, adding or creating new assignments to assess student learning, or reorganizing or tweaking already existing assessment approaches. Sample responses from each of these three broad categories are included below:

Questions/Directions/Wording

- *“I need to be sure the wording of exam questions are clear.”*
- *“I need to move away from quiz bank only and include short answer to assess student knowledge during exams.”*
- *“Include additional questions pertaining to leadership role responsibilities as an LPN throughout the course.”*
- *“I noticed that the wording of the questions that I ask might be a little confusing. I am going to re-word them to make them more clear what I am looking for.”*
- *“I will adjust the explanation of the activity and the instructions and guide them to where I need them to find this information.”*
- *“I plan to revise my exam by incorporating more higher-order questions aligned with Bloom’s taxonomy levels 3–5. These questions will ask students to apply, analyze, and evaluate evolutionary concepts, rather than simply recall definitions. For example, I will include a scenario-based question where students must interpret an evolutionary tree or analyze how environmental pressures could lead to speciation.”*
- *“Adjusting current simple multiple choice assignments to more dynamic ones (crosswords, fill-in the blanks, etc.), which are a great way to retain information.”*

New or Additional Assignments

- *I need to add assignments to make sure students are understanding poetry and its subliminal messages. An assignment that allows students to get the message of a poem can start to the process of making poetry more accessible and understandable for them.”*
- *I plan to modify my in class evaluations and my unit 4 exam over this topic.”*
- *“I am incorporating in-class lesson worksheets for each lecture to help improve understanding and analysis.”*
- *“I plan to add a worksheet to give to the students to complete.”*

- *“I will cut back on assigned essays and quizzes and replace this with verbal communication and presentations by the student.”*
- *“I will include a project for students to do on their own finding information from an area they want to learn more about.”*

Reorganize/Adjusting Existing Approaches

- *“Right now one of the assessments is a question packet (from the reading), one is a quiz (that has questions pertaining to the packet), and another is the discussion. I might try to reorganize these to reinforce each other.”*
- *“Adjust the amount of time spent on this topic in lab and lecture. Spend more time with hands-on practice of this skill.”*
- *“Shift towards more project-based assessments and treating testing as a tool (knowledge checks).”*
- *“a project rubric may be a better fit for assessment for this particular skill rather than exam questions.”*
- *“Need to complete this assignment toward the end of the semester by completing all selections during a lesson time for each student.”*
- *“I need to find a a video of interviewing techniques or setup a role playing activity in order to collect facts through to complete an accident report.”*

Conclusion

The Spring 2025 data collection reporting period represented the third consecutive semester in which respondents were asked to report at the end of the current semester rather than reporting retroactively. This change, designed to improve recall, timeliness and stress the urgency of now, has largely been successful. After a slight dip in response rates as this change in procedure was rolled out, response rates reached an all-time high for Course Assessment reporting this cycle. If these high response rates can be maintained, it will stand as strong proof of concept that more immediate data collection is worthwhile.

In addition to an increase in response rates, this reporting cycle saw a continued uptick in several other indicators of Barton's 'culture of assessment.' For the third straight reporting cycle, the average number of that had empirical data to support the course adjustments they planned to make to their courses, the average number of different adjustment instructors planned to make to their courses, and the number of different assessment tools used by instructors to assess student learning,

Finally, continuing another trend from the prior two data collection cycles, instructors report using more than traditional pre-test/post-test or summative evaluations, such as class finals to assess student learning. While these traditional types of approaches were still utilized by nearly half of all respondents, the most common form of assessment instructors reported using were regular assignments administered during the normal run of the given course – a strategy employed by nearly three in four respondents.

Bad or incomplete data begets bad decisions, and while no assessment data is perfect, it is heartening that instead of relying on perhaps a single item on a final exam to assess whether or not a student has mastered a given competency, instructors routinely report using multiple methods of assessment and not relying solely on limited data points to assess student learning. Continued emphasis on using good, illustrative data for their own purposes will only serve to further enhance the culture of assessment present at Barton Community College.