



## *HLC Accreditation Evidence*

Title: Course Assessment Committee Annual Report

URL:

Office of Origin: Vice President of Instruction

Contact(s):

- Coordinator of Assessment



Course Assessment Committee Annual Report for 2021-2022

Academic Year

March 28, 2022

## **Executive Summary**

### **Procedures**

Following up on a one-year cycle of pilot data collection conducted during the 2020-2021 academic year, for the Fall portion of the 20210-22 academic year, the course assessment committee expanded its data collection process to the entire college, including all campuses and modalities and asked for data from faculty between November 2021 and January 2022. Overall, approximately half (51%) of all faculty submitted the required course assessment.

### **Key Findings**

- Pilot data showed wide acceptance of the idea that course improvement decisions were being made based on course assessment data.
- Respondents from the entire college indicated a strong degree of comprehension of the need to link specific competencies with relatively weak student performance to concrete adjustments to their courses.
- Faculty are open to, and making, a myriad of adjustments to their courses based on their assessment data. Strategies as varied from changing assignments, improving assessment tools and instruments themselves, and improving course content and activities are being utilized across all college campuses.
- With an overall response rate of just over half of all respondents, there are still some gaps in awareness about submitting course assessment reports that need to be addressed. Some confusion about types of assessment among faculty more layers of accountability and direct messaging from supervisors will need emphasis in the future to improve response rates.

### **Conclusions**

This report and the larger data collection process it is a part of an important first step for the college to begin to documenting the adjustments instructors are making to their courses in order to improve student learning. However, this is just that – a first step. Increasing response rates, continuing to improve the data collection process and form, analyzing patterns and best practices that will emerge from faculty adjustments being made and identifying longitudinal trends are goals the committee needs to focus on to capitalize on the large degree of positives present already.

## Introduction

The Course Assessment Committee was chartered in the Fall of 2019 as part of a concerted effort to make Barton's assessment infrastructure more robust and to continue to build on the culture of assessment already in place at the college. As part of its charter, the overall goal of the committee was to support the establishment of a robust culture of course assessment across the college. The purpose of was to assist and train faculty members on establishing an assessment mindset, support assessment at the course level, and assist in the collection, tracking, and reporting of course assessment data.

To this end, the committee immediately set to work on establishing a data collection form and procedures by which data about course level assessment could be collected from faculty. As a result of these efforts, a pilot data collection project using a select number of faculty was conducted over both semesters of the 2020-2021 academic year. Based on the feedback and experiences from the pilot group, adjustments were made to the data collection instrument and procedures during the summer of 2021. Following those adjustments, the committee then asked the entire college to provide data on the course level assessment data and improvements individual instructors were making based on those data to help improve student learning.

While some quantitative course assessment data had been collected for select courses at Barton before the dawn of this initiative, the creation of the course assessment committee marked the first move toward universally collecting data from all Barton campuses and faculty, as well as adding an important qualitative component to allow for documentation and cataloguing of the improvements to student learning that occur at Barton as part of the continuous cycle of assessment, adjustments, and improvements.

## Procedures

### *Pilot Project*

Pilot data collection began in fall 2020 with all instructors from a group of five different courses selected for inclusion in the pilot program. Courses were randomly selected but courses were selected from a subset of courses that had already been providing quantitative assessment data and thus were used to be asked to provide course assessment data. These courses were American History 1877-Present, Anatomy & Physiology, Business English, Elements of Statistics, and

Principles of Phlebotomy. All instructors who taught a section of any of the five courses were enrolled in the pilot group, resulting a final pool of 16 instructors who were included in the pilot project during the 2020-21 academic year.

### **Instrument**

The pilot survey contained a total of eight items. Four pertained to how the faculty utilized assessment data, three pertained to how the faculty rated the data collection process, and one pertained to identifying which course respondents were provided data for. The instrument itself was embedded within a Canvas Quiz for a 'course' the pilot instructors were all enrolled in. This approach mirrored an approach already in use by the Classroom Assessment Committee.

### **Data Collection**

A request letter was sent to supervisors alerting them of the upcoming pilot project before the first data request was sent to individual instructors. After that request letter, an email invitation to take part in the pilot project was sent to all potential respondents. The email included both an explanation of the purpose of and necessity for the project, instructions for how to complete the form, and a deadline by which to respond. Reminder emails were sent to non-respondents on two additional occasions before data collection was closed and all responses were downloaded for analysis.

### **Data Analysis**

The Pilot data was exported from the Canvas shell and downloaded into Excel for analysis. Open-ended responses were alphabetized and analyzed for common themes and ideas. Frequency percentages were calculated for quantitative responses.

### ***College-wide***

Prior to beginning data collection from the entire college, the individual deans and other upper-level college administrators for each impacted division and campus were updated regarding the data collection project. A letter was sent out from the committee chair to all faculty members in spring of 2021 asking them to begin thinking about documenting their course level changes they were making to improve student learning and to be prepared for the new data collection requirement for course assessment to begin in the then forthcoming fall 2021 semester. Slightly modified versions of this

email were then sent from the committee chair to all faculty in July 2021 and then again at the outset of the fall 2021 semester in mid-August.

Additionally, CougarTALES sessions were conducted in the fall of 2019 and fall of 2020 to prepare faculty for the forthcoming requirement to begin reporting course assessment data. Training videos were also prepared by the Outcomes Assessment Committee Chair to help faculty delineate between the different levels of assessment they were now being asked to report. The video specifically pertaining to course assessment was promulgated and promoted by the course assessment committee in communications with college faculty leading up to the full data collection process.

As the fall 2021 semester came to a close, emails were sent to all faculty at all Barton campuses to complete their course assessment reporting between December of 2021 and January of 2022. The course assessment email contained an explanation for the requirement was being instituted, the importance of documenting the changes were instructors were likely already making, a link to the Microsoft Form, and a deadline for completion of January 28, 2022. Reminder emails were then sent on three occasions, one as instructors left for winter break in December, one when they returned in early January, and a final reminder was sent on the Monday (January 25) of the final week data were being collected.

### **Instrument**

Based on feedback from the pilot collection data, members of the larger overarching outcomes assessment committee, and the committee's own members, the data collection instrument was edited and revised before being rolled out to the entire college. The biggest change was a move away from the 'quiz' within Canvas. This move was made to help prevent confusion with too much overlap with the data collection procedure used by the more well-established classroom assessment committee. Additionally, the transition to the Microsoft form allowed for the embedding of an instructional video of how to fill out the form that was recorded and embedded within the form instructions.

The revised instrument contained a total of sixteen items divided into four sections. The first section contained seven items all allowed for identification of courses and information about the courses for which the data were being submitted. Typical items include course CRN, campus location, instructor name, and number of students enrolled. The second section contained four items in which respondents were asked to report specific data about which course competencies they were reporting

on and their evidence for why a given competency was showing either relatively strong or weak performance. The third section contained three items in which respondents were asked to describe the adjustment they planned on making to their course and their rationale for doing so. The fourth and final section was designed for internal use by the course assessment committee to allow them to continue to make improvements to data collection instrument and process and contained just two items looking at historical adjustments instructors had made in the past and comments, suggestions, and other messages directly for the committee.

### **Data Collection**

Responses were submitted between the end of the fall 2021 semester on December 13, 2021 and January 28, 2022. Responses were entered into Microsoft forms from a link provided to each instructor in an invitation email. Data collection ceased following the January deadline and all responses received by that time were then downloaded as a Microsoft Excel worksheet in early February 2022.

### **Data Analysis**

All data were cleaned and screened to check for valid responses (e.g. during assigned timeframe, from a course taught during fall 2021). Any responses outside of the assigned data collection window, courses without identifying information, and/or duplicate responses from the same instructors were deleted. In the event of duplicate responses, the most recently submitted response was included in the analysis.

## **Results**

### ***Pilot Project***

Eight of the pilot project potential participants took part in the project, for a response rate of 50%. The majority of respondents (75%) indicate via a standard Likert scale response that they 'strongly agreed' that course assessment data informed their decisions about future course offerings and all respondents 'agreed' to some degree with the statement (Table 1). Likewise, all respondents indicated it was at least 'somewhat important' to use course assessment data to inform decisions about alterations and improvements being made to courses. Half (50%) of all respondents indicated

it was 'very important' to use course assessment data to inform their course adjustment decisions (Table 1).

**Table 1: Using Assessment Data**

<b>Question 1</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<b>Course assessment data informs the decisions I make about adjustments to future course offerings</b>	75%	25%	0%	0%
<b>Question 2</b>	<b>Very Important</b>	<b>Somewhat Important</b>	<b>Of Little Importance</b>	<b>Not Important at All</b>
<b>Course assessment data is _____ to informing my decisions about making adjustments to this course in the future</b>	50%	50%	0%	0%

Respondents offered detailed insights into what adjustments had made in the past to their courses based on quantitative course competency data. A sampling of full responses is included below, but respondents indicated a variety of changes including, but not limited to, rewording discussions, reading articles, changing course pacing, adjusting course videos, adjusting PowerPoints, and adding more components to their visual library before teaching the course again.

- I am a person who constantly tinkers with my courses and tries to find better ways to teach the material and new material to teach. I teach history, and what happens doesn't change, but our understanding of it does. So I'm always reading a new book or article or watching a professor to try and learn a new approach. On top of this, I look at assignments, quizzes, pre/post-tests, and discussions to see if there is an area students struggled in, which indicates I might need to change my approach. I have a few quiz questions that I realized were worded poorly, so I've*



*changed them. I also have some discussions that didn't jump start a lively discussion like I'd hoped, so I'm rewording them. One thing I am trying to change is to have my assessments be more open-ended and opinion oriented. This has a lot to do with wanting to cut down on cheating. Open-ended questions make it easier for me to identify cheating. It also allows the students to spend more time thinking about what they think or believe about a historical era, event, person, etc. I'm trying to incorporate assessments that will better help create historical reflection.*

- I was thinking about making a library of helpful videos that students can select if they have questions about certain topics.*
- I will re-record my lectures to make sure that I am emphasizing the material that students seem to score the least on. I am also in the process of creating visual tools to help my students remember the material better (infographic, charts, etc). I have already changed some of my assignments/discussions to allow room for students to choose which assignment they would like to complete for credit ~ I believe in offering a variety of instruction-styles and assessment-styles in order to better accommodate my students' needs.*

Respondents also offered detailed insights into what adjustments had planned to make in real time based on the courses they had just completed before they taught the course again. A sampling of full responses is included below, but respondents indicated a great deal of overlap with changes they had made in the past with changes they intended to make in the future. Some of these changes included very broad things, like trying a grasp on some of the breadth of their topic, but some were very focused on a narrow change based on a single competency that needed attention.

- My answer to this has more to do with the field of history than the assessments I have in my classes. My western civilization classes cover thousands of years of history, and my American history classes cover hundreds of years of history. It's impossible to be an "expert" in all those eras, and it's also difficult to have a firm grasp on all of those eras. The competencies I have identified are the ones I feel the weakest in. As I learn more about the history a competency covers, I acquire a better understanding of how to teach it.*
- I would like to put more focus more on the first 2 course outcomes/competencies that is listed in my syllabus: ... While these are the first 2 outcomes/competencies that are listed in the course syllabus, they are not repeated throughout the semester like with most of the other outcomes listed. This is a very small portion of the course material that is delivered and while it is*

*important for the students to learn & understand how the phlebotomist plays a role in the medical field and how they interact with other departments and personnel, this is a skill/knowledge that is more developed while they are in the clinical portion of the phlebotomy program. While this is a small portion, it is ultimately very important that my students understand their role going into the clinical settings, so I do plan to place more emphasis on these competencies/outcomes throughout my course.*

Respondents offered feedback on the pilot data collection process using a Likert scale response. Responses were all positive, with all respondents ‘agreeing’ to some degree that the data collection process was easy as well as efficient. However, respondents were most likely to merely ‘agree’ that it was an easy process (75%) and most likely to ‘agree’ it was an efficient process 100% (Table 2). While still all positive, the gap between ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’ on both items suggested room for improvement.

**Table 2: Pilot Data Collection Process**

<b>Question 5</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<b>This was an easy process to collect data on how I am using my course assessment data</b>	25%	75%	0%	0%
<b>Question 6</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<b>This was an efficient process to collect data on how I am using my course assessment data</b>	0%	100%	0%	0%

Respondents did not have a lot of concrete suggestions for improvements to make to the data collection process at the pilot data collection process, as just three offered responses, but those who

did offer suggestions indicated changes to questionnaires, coordination for more instructors, and difficulties in how to summarize some more complex ideas in a simple form.

- *It's always difficult to try and explain on paper what changes I try to implement from session to session. I don't think the process you have here is bad. My only thought is I have a hard time summarizing the things I know I'm working on to make my classes better and more responsive to what students are doing on my assessments. I'm not sure I have any suggestions for a better way of doing this.*
- *It probably is a good idea to review with other instructors to make sure we are collecting the data in a similar manner and for similar competencies. I need to continue to reach out that we are being consistent.*
- *Question 6 should have a Strongly Agree option.*

### **College-wide**

All instructors who taught a course during fall 2021 were required to complete a course assessment. All campuses and all modalities were included, so for those not on the semester system, such as those teaching for Barton Online, any session taught during Fall 2021 qualified as well. Based on these parameters, a total of 251 different instructors were listed in the Barton's scheduling matrix and were therefore required to complete a course assessment based on their Fall 2021 data. Of these 251, 128 submitted a valid response, for a 51% response rate (Table 3)

**Table 3: Respondent Characteristics**

	Responded (n)	Potential Respondents (n)	% Respondents
<b>Fall 2021 Instructors</b>	128	251	51%

Of the 251 instructors who taught a course during the Fall of 2021, a total of 21 were not listed on Barton's internal employee directory as of February 20, 2022. Of those 21, four submitted a

course assessment form, while 17 did not. For the 230 instructors who were listed in the employee directory, a total of 124 submitted a course assessment report.

The 230 potential respondents for whom employment characteristic could be identified were broken down by employment status (ECLS code and primary campus location) in order to identify areas of strength and opportunities for improvement in future data collection efforts. Instructors with both adjunct and full-time faculty ECLS codes were classified as full-time. Instructors listed with multiple campus locations were classified by their physical location for those with both Barton Online (BOL) and physical locations. Instructors with two different physical locations (e.g. Ft. Riley and Ft. Leavenworth) were classified based on the campus where they taught the majority of their classes.

Full-time faculty had the highest response rate, with 42 of 59 potential respondents submitting a report (72%). About half (53%) of adjunct and part-time faculty submitted responses. Among full-time staff who also taught a course, response rates were the lowest, at 5% (Table 4).

There were also variations in responses by campus location, with Ft. Riley instructors exhibiting a very high response rate of 89%. Barton Online instructors were also slightly above average for the college as a whole with a 57% response rate (Table 4).

**Table 4: Respondent Characteristics by Barton Status**

<b>ECLS Code</b>	<b>Responded (n)</b>	<b>Potential Respondents (n)</b>	<b>Response Rates (%)</b>
<b><i>Full-time Faculty</i></b>	42	59	72%
<b><i>Adjunct/Part-time</i></b>	81	152	53%
<b><i>Full-time Staff</i></b>	1	19	5%
<b>Campus</b>	<b>Responded (n)</b>	<b>Potential Respondents (n)</b>	<b>Response Rates (%)</b>
<b><i>Barton</i></b>	58	124	47%
<b><i>Barton Online</i></b>	38	67	57%
<b><i>Ft. Riley</i></b>	23	26	89%
<b><i>Ft. Leavenworth</i></b>	5	12	52%

Respondents were asked to give very basic information about their classes that their assessment report was based upon, included the number of students being assessed. Of the 128

reports received, the reports were based upon a total of 2,042 students, with the average class size reporting being a mean of 15.9 and a median of 12 (Table 5).

**Table 5: Students Assessed**

Total	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation
2042	15.9	12	13.96

### ***Course Adjustments***

After having provided basic information about the courses for which they were responding, instructors were asked to identify specific competencies for which they saw areas for improvement. Because of the varied nature of competencies that are specific to each individual course, there is very little to be gleaned at the group level from those competencies. However, in the broadest possible terms, most instructors were specifically able to point to an exact competency that was an area of concern. This strong connection between specific competencies with demonstrated weakness or opportunity for improvement with corrective adjustments being made suggests the strong relationship between course assessment data and course assessment adjustments suggested by the pilot respondents was true for the larger college as well.

A sampling of typical responses is included below, but with Barton's institutional goal of 70% satisfactory achievement on each course competency, instructors were well versed in identifying areas with relatively low achievement and were able to do so with a high degree of specificity. Additionally, a wide variety of assessment tools were identified, ranging from midterm and final exams, specific rubric items, journals, oral quizzes, lab discussions, knowledge of regulatory requirements, and live demonstrations. One instructor even built an isolated classroom level assessment data point to make a larger course-level assessment upon conclusion of the course.

- *9 out of 14 students were unable to identify comma splices, sentence fragments, and run on sentences in at least 50% of their polished essays.*
- *Based on midterm exam, 55% (10 out of 18) of students were unable to identify the first common tendency in perception. 61% (11 out of 18) of students were not able to identify the second common tendency in perception.*

- *Final Exam only 11/21 could define and distinguish between the types of biological disease-causing organisms*
- *Live demonstration of movements for a grade done 4 times in the semester. A rubric is used to assess competencies A 1-5 and C 1 and 2.*

*I found this competency to be extremely weak. Zero out of nine [sic] students demonstrated mastery and complete understanding due to the fact that answers illustrated personal opinions as to how one becomes a leader along with the quality of leadership.*

- *I know this is not a CAT but I would like to reference data from that here. For my CAT, I asked a*

*"muddiest" point question. And, several of the students mentioned that the listening assignments in the course were difficult for them. For the listening section of the final quiz, 4/5 students answered the question correctly but I believe this is because I use a relatively easy text for the final. I think some students struggle with the listening comprehension activities throughout the course.*

- *Nine of twelve students who are considered journeymen electricians did not know the regulatory requirements for temporary wiring.*
- *Of my 12 students only 2 made a perfect score on this activity based on their previous experience of determining waste categories. About 8 students did not grasp the concept and required extra assistance.*
- *Only 13 students mastered this concept with a score of 100%. The average mastery was 68%, with 7 students marked as struggling with the assignment. Also, the average number of questions was 23 questions and average time spent on assignment is 1 hours, 34 minutes.*
- *Only 46 out 76 passed this competency. Many had never used a database and because it is taught near the end of the session, many students are just trying to finish the course.*

- *Oral quizzes indicated 5 of 15 students were at least occasionally not ready to employ active listening techniques.*
- *Test statistics showed that on two questions, no more than 35% of the class were able to identify effective methods of communication through communication builders and blockers.*
- *They had a difficult time discussing the role of women in the American West without leading follow up questions. I have found this to be the case in other terms as well.*
- *This competency was also assessed using a grading rubric for each lab where this competency should have been demonstrated. The overall class average was 2.54, below mastery and only 3 students out of 9 achieved mastery by the end of the semester.*
- *While the assignment was completed by 9 out of 9 students, the assignment was not long enough to enable me to assess their knowledge of identifying all five elements of a story.*
- *There were not enough opportunities for students to demonstrate these skills offered this semester.*
- *Upon grading SWOT Analysis' assigned to students, 5 of 16 students did not correctly report opportunities and threats of their particular business they were analyzing.*

Moving beyond identifying which area or competency instructors had identified for improvement, instructors were able to detail numerous concrete adjustments they wanted to make to their courses in the future based on their competency data from fall 2021. Like the specific competencies, there was a great deal of variation, but some common approaches were observed. Changes included adjustments to specific course content and lessons, such as discussing eating disorders more in one course, or adding map-based activities in another. Many instructors who indicated plans to alter course content planned on adding videos and other multimedia piece to better explain their concepts. Other instructors indicated they planned to make adjustments to specific assignments they were already utilizing in their course. Another school of thought included more reading, research, preparation and other activities to increase the instructor's own knowledge of their material in order to better convey that knowledge of the material. Finally, there was also a section of instructors who indicated plans to change the pacing, scheduling, or relative emphasis of certain concepts within their course. A sampling of typical responses are included below.

- *I plan to discuss eating disorders more, and add in an interactive activity to help them learn the difference.*
- *Add more interactive maps as required.*
- *Additionally I plan to add a link to the chapter 15 Outline page of Module 6 discussing possible motivations behind eating disorders and the relationship of exercise to eating disorders. I will continue to use the Case Study on the Module 6 Assignment page to determine student understanding of the psychology behind eating disorders and treatment.*
- *Conduct a Q & A session to assess students understanding of this material and see if more time needs to be spent covering additional information pertaining to it.*
- *I added an OSHA Hierarchy of Controls video and will add a document that will describe the OSHA's hierarchy of controls which outlines the most to the least effective*

*workplace  
safety  
measures.*

*I am adding an 8-minute video explaining the Populist Party. In addition, I am adding lecture materials tying the Populist Movement to Trustbusting in Kansas.*

- *I am going to enhance the class discussion with a contrast and compare activity to*

*further develop the distinctions in "creation, purpose and final stages" for each system.*

- *I plan of adjusting the instructions to clarify the portion where they make the most mistakes*
- *I plan on adding a communication activity so that the student can see and practice effective communication methods.*
- *I plan on adding a video lecture, a study guide on the organelles and additional homework specifically targeted at organelle function.*
- *I plan on changing the time that we spend on essays to devote more time to studying good examples of essay writing.*
- *I plan on more demonstrations and more hands-on practice for students*



- *I plan to add a hands-on activity to demonstrate the updated format of the atomic structure.*
- *I plan to add additional enrichment activity so that we spend more time on airfield operations*
- *I plan to add an additional video on how likes and dislikes work in Spanish and include a short practice quiz (with answers) within the video so students can test themselves on these areas before doing the homework and quiz that counts for points.*
- *I plan to institute more active learning methods in the classroom such as a quiz question for the class or a case study to help the students apply the information to real world scenarios.*
- *Next semester I am going to have them research to locate two or three developmental pamphlets and defend them using the textbook and other educational materials provided in the course.*
- *When the course is taught again in the fall of 2022, I plan to dedicate more time during not only the clinical hours the students hold, but also to incorporate the decision making and nursing process into lecture activities as well.*

While the primary focus of the data collection process for course assessment was centered on adjustments being made to the course itself, because the linkage between quantitative and qualitative data are so important, an item as included asking instructors of the tools and rubrics they were using to give them their assessment data needed any adjustments themselves to ensure that any course adjustments were being made on the basis of reliable competency data.

Many instructors indicated they were satisfied with their methods of assessing students learning on a competency-by-competency basis. In fact, just over half of all respondents (52%) either did not answer the item about potential improvements to their assessment tools and approaches. Of the remaining 48% (n=59) who did answer the item and had a potential change in mind, some focused on lengthening or expanding assignments and rubrics in order to more fully capture specific competencies. However, instructors were most likely to indicate plans to change which specific assignments they were using in order to assess students. A sampling of typical responses is included below.

- *I need to make this project/ presentation longer so all five elements will be specifically identified.*

- *I need to adapt a pre and continuing assignment approach throughout my course to ensure a more effective learning environment.*
- *Yes. I will make the assessment tool a bit more comprehensive.*
- *The RUBRIC which was the assessment tool was adjusted throughout the course. However, separating some of the requirements may very well improve the student's learning outcome.*
- *I plan to provide more scenario-based questions in exams other than definition-based questions. Interpersonal communication is a very practical course and I want students to be able to use what we learn in class to analyze their own communication*

*interactions.*

*Instead of a discussion and response assessment, I could make a formal classroom presentation. I think, first, I need to nail down the lesson to elicit more submission and more confident submissions before I change the*

- *I needed to introduce an activity to enhance student understanding of the concept of sports psychology. Currently, the student is only given information on types*

*of eating disorders given in the Chapter 15 audio lecture and outline. An activity is required to drive the concept of how disordered eating affects exercise. So, I added an exercise and eating disorder link. Also add this question to the Mod 6 Assignment page; "please discuss how sport psychology relates to one of the topics in this module. (your choice). You may have to go back to the first page of Module 1 to get started."*

- *I need to move away from grading pharmacology knowledge and add more emphasis on pharmacology application.*
- *I need to change my checklist grading approach to a series of rubrics designed for each stage of development (at specific intervals).*
- *I think that a class discussion during the presentations will also provide greater insight as an assessment tool.*
- *I will also need to require them to send me a digital copy of their Excel work so that I can check formulas and commands used.*

## **Process Feedback**

While data collection was officially 'live' for Fall 2021 and the pilot process had concluded, the course assessment committee, in the spirit of using feedback and assessment as part of a continuous cycle of improvement to improve student learning, also requested feedback from Barton instructors about the course assessment data collection process. The committee plans to use this feedback to make minor improvements or tweaks to the data collection form or process between semesters and will make more substantial changes based on feedback from these data and key stakeholders at the college from year-to-year as well.

Coming at the end of a form and with a totally open-ended response, response rates to the feedback questions were understandably low, but a total of 15 respondents did provide comments or questions for the assessment committee. Most comments were largely positive or appreciative, but some more actionable items included a request to provide information back to respondents (which this report is designed to accomplish), altering the focus to two weaknesses rather than a strength and a weakness, not asking about CRNs so that pooled data across courses can be used, and some things about the appearance of the form itself. Sample responses with suggestions are included below, followed by more positive comments and suggestions.

- *I don't think I have any questions. Whenever I fill out these forms I always have a little bit of fear that I'm doing them wrong. It might be nice to make an instructional video later on of good responses/this is what we're looking for. That way it would give us who teach a more practical way to know we are doing this correctly.*
- *I would not have specified location, then I would have pooled my data from all CRNs as this course is taught F2F and online.*
- *It would be helpful if this form had a spellchecker on it, especially as it is not possible to see more than one line at a time when entering text.*

- *I think conducting a Course Assessment is a good way for instructors to reflect on what they can do better in the future, which is a vital piece to improving instruction. I think it would be better to have the course assessment look at two weaknesses instead of a strength and a weakness. If the point of the assessment is to reflect on what we can do better/different next time, then looking at a strength that doesn't need to be adapted is irrelevant to the course assessment. I like this form, it is straightforward and easy to use. However, I would like the response boxes to be taller which would allow me to see what I have typed. Scrolling back through my responses makes it hard to read and I would like to be able to read my entire response as it is written and not have to scroll through it.*

*In the assessment report, online and F2F sections of the same data are reported together. This assessment asks to identify one specific class. This makes it difficult to correctly judge the competency percentages of one specific class.*

- *Is this the same as the CAT that we previously completed in an online quiz format? If not is this redundant, or if so, do we still need the CAT which is eerily similar. Thanks for*

*all of your work to get this together. Make a fabulous holiday.*

- *I appreciate that Barton has instructors go through this process. Genuine reflection on assessment is integral to a pedagogue's professional growth.*
- *I believe this required activity was a really good idea. Sometimes we get so busy preparing for a new semester that we do not spend enough time reflecting on the outcomes of the previous semester. This was very helpful for me as a teacher and once I learned where to find the appropriate data, it was not that time consuming to complete. My questions were answered in a timely fashion and I appreciate all the help I received. Thank you.*
- *Kurt's "how to" video was very useful. After reviewing the video, I was able to understand what was meant by strengths (really well) and weaknesses (needs improvement).*

## Discussion

While the detailed data on respondent characteristics will likely be stripped from the final report, those data nonetheless offer an important insight into the group-level differences in faculty and staff who are completed the required course assessment report. As a relatively new committee adding a new assessment requirement that is different from the more familiar Classroom Assessment techniques (CATs), differentiating our process from theirs will be a critical part of the work of this committee. None of the athletic coaches completed a report which is an obvious area for improvement. Student-athletes are not exempt from their classroom requirements and athletic coaches should be held to the same standards. They, too, are faculty charged with improving student learning, so more efforts will need to be made to impress on this group, in particular, that this is a requirement. Conversely, one campus had an outstanding response rate of almost 90% and, not coincidentally, the two supervisors on that campus were active in checking in with me to see who had completed the assessment, following up with non-responders, etc. Obviously, strong buy-in and active support from direct supervisors, is a tool we should harness as a committee as well.

With the varied nature of courses across multiple campuses and modalities, meta-observations are necessarily limited, but that doesn't mean some common themes weren't observed. One common area observed was a good relationship between specific competencies that were quantifiably in need of improvement and following through with concrete steps to improve those competencies. While the immediate goal of this committee and the data collection project is tangible data, it is also tied to the committee's larger focus on building a culture of assessment. Though the fact that the response rate is only about 50% tempers overall observations, the fact that a large proportion of the respondents demonstrated a strong linkage between the concepts is an indicator of at least a good nucleus of understanding at the college.

Respondents also indicated a good deal of variety and creativity in their respective adjustment they planned to make to their courses, which also indicates a strong and growing culture of assessment. Instructors indicated changing assignments, adding content, increasing hands-on and multimedia components, additional study and reading, among a multitude of adjustments. Instructors also indicated a willingness to change assessment tools where necessary. One of the driving concepts behind assessment in general is making it a useful tool for the instructor rather than a top-down one-size-fits all approach to assessment. It appears, at least after one full cycle of assessment,

that a large portion of instructors at Barton are embracing that approach, which portends good things for the future as the culture of assessment grows and the ability to track changes long-term and identify trends only grows.

### ***Limitations***

While some positives can be gleaned from over 120 responses across four physical campus locations as well as BART Online, just barely half of all instructors responded to a required activities. Gaps exist in getting responses from part-time and adjunct instructors, as well as athletic coaches. With 49% of required respondents not submitting a report, caution about making too many broad assertions about the college as a whole must be necessarily tempered.

Additionally, as the first data collection cycle was a pilot project, we only have 'current' data for the full college. As the semester pass, it will be important not just to identify how the college is doing at a snapshot of a given semester, but to identify trends and long-term developments. At this time, this is not yet possible.

The form itself and data collection process will likely need tweaks as well. Though the committee had one pilot set of data to build off of, there will always be room for improvement. The low response rate is likely due to multiple factors, but one of which is certainly tied to continued difficulty among some faculty in differentiating between course and classroom assessments. Additionally, while focusing on a both a positive and negative competency makes for better optics and keeps the focus of the report from being overly negative, it also produced limited data about actual adjustments being made to a course. In general, most instructors who are happy with a competency are not going to adjust how that specific competency is addressed. Trimming unnecessary questions could be helpful in upping response rates.

### **Conclusion**

This report and the larger data collection process it is a part of represent an important first step in beginning to document and learn from the adjustments instructors are making to their courses in order to improve student learning. However, this is just that – a first step. Increasing response rates, continuing to improve the data collection process and form, and identifying longer term trends are future goals the committee needs to focus on in order to capitalize on the large degree of positives present in the report. Instructors are exhibiting a great degree of creativity and adaptability in making

improvements to their course. Any efforts the college can make to continue to support that environment and instructors in general will only help in the future.