Capital University

2019-2020 Annual Assessment Report

Assessment at Capital University is central to the accomplishment of the university mission of "*Transforming lives through higher education*" by providing experiences for *personal growth*; preparing *knowledgeable, independent, critical thinkers*; and inspiring *individuals to be morally reflective, spiritually alive, and civically engaged*. The assessment process is ongoing and engages units across the institution, both academic and co-curricular. The process is overseen at multiple levels by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, the Associate Provost for Accreditation and Analytics, and the Director of Assessment and Student Analytics.

The assessment process is multi-pronged and incorporates assessment of student learning outcomes in academic and co-curricular programs and an ongoing program review process. In 2019-2020, assessment efforts focused on assessing the Signature Learning Outcome of "*Students speak, write, read, and listen effectively*." Programs were asked to assess this outcome in an upper-level course (preferably in a capstone course) during 2019-2020, as well as other additional program learning outcomes. In Fall 2019, faculty and staff indicated what outcomes they would assess, in which courses, by what assessment methods, and if the program outcomes supported additional Signature Learning Outcomes. Faculty and staff also projected how the results would be used to improve student learning. Twenty-six academic programs (81%) submitted assessment plans.

Student development programs revised learning outcomes and developed assessment plans for 2019-2020. In addition to clarifying learning outcomes, units started to identify how these outcomes would be assessed. At present, all units have identified outcomes and measures and are in the process of implementing their assessment plans.

In Spring 2020, Capital University implemented the Campus Labs/Anthology *Outcomes* module. The *Outcomes* module allows academic and co-curricular programs to input student learning outcomes, assessment plans, assessment results and analyses, and document planned changes to curricula and the assessment process. The *Outcomes* module provides a platform for aggregating student learning outcome results across courses and programs. Using standardized achievement categories of *Exceeded Expectations*, *Met Expectations*, *Partially Met Expectations*, *Improvement Needed*, and *Missing or Incomplete*, assessors retain the responsibility and flexibility of designing measures to fit their specific learning environment, and setting the criteria for those expectations. The *Outcomes* platform provides a pathway to assess student learning outcomes at the institutional level, while still using authentic student work. Although currently still in a nascent phase, more complex analyses will be possible with additional data.

Professional Development

Capital University's Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching provides ongoing professional development and consultation around assessment and the use of technology and data management platforms. In Fall Semester 2019, workshop sessions were provided on *Converting a Course to Hybrid or Online – Part 1: Student learning Outcomes* (10/10/2019) and *Rubrics in iLearn* (10/29/2020). In Spring Semester 2020, additional professional development was provided for both assessment, in general, and the use of the *Outcomes* module. Administrators from the Provost's Office and the Director of Assessment worked with faculty and staff to create learning outcomes and assessment plans.

Administrative assistants were trained to enter learning outcomes in *Outcomes* for academic programs. Faculty chairs and directors attended a group workshop (3/30/2020) in which they were introduced to the module and asked to review their outcomes. A second workshop (5/5/2020) covered how to enter assessment plans and results, as well as how to develop and use rubrics in *Rubrics*. Workshop recordings and additional training materials were made available to the campus community. The Director of Assessment consulted with program faculty and staff to support the entering of assessment results into *Outcomes*. An additional workshop on 5/19/2020 focused specifically on assessment issues within student development programs.

As of 7/15/2020, 21 academic programs had entered results, seven had entered assessment plans but not results, two programs had outcomes but no plans entered, and two are without outcomes entered. Two of 13 units have entered results. Many student development units are still in the process of developing and implementing assessment plans. In addition, programs have been delayed in entering results due to needed changes in the *Outcomes* program organizational structure, or competing time demands for accreditation reports and COVID-related response tasks. The Director of Assessment will continue to follow up with program faculty and staff to capture 2019-2020 assessment results.

Signature Learning Outcomes

In 2019-2020, the University's seven Signature Learning Outcomes were assessed in 60 courses utilizing 1719 student assessments.

Student Achievement of Learning Outcomes 2019-2020

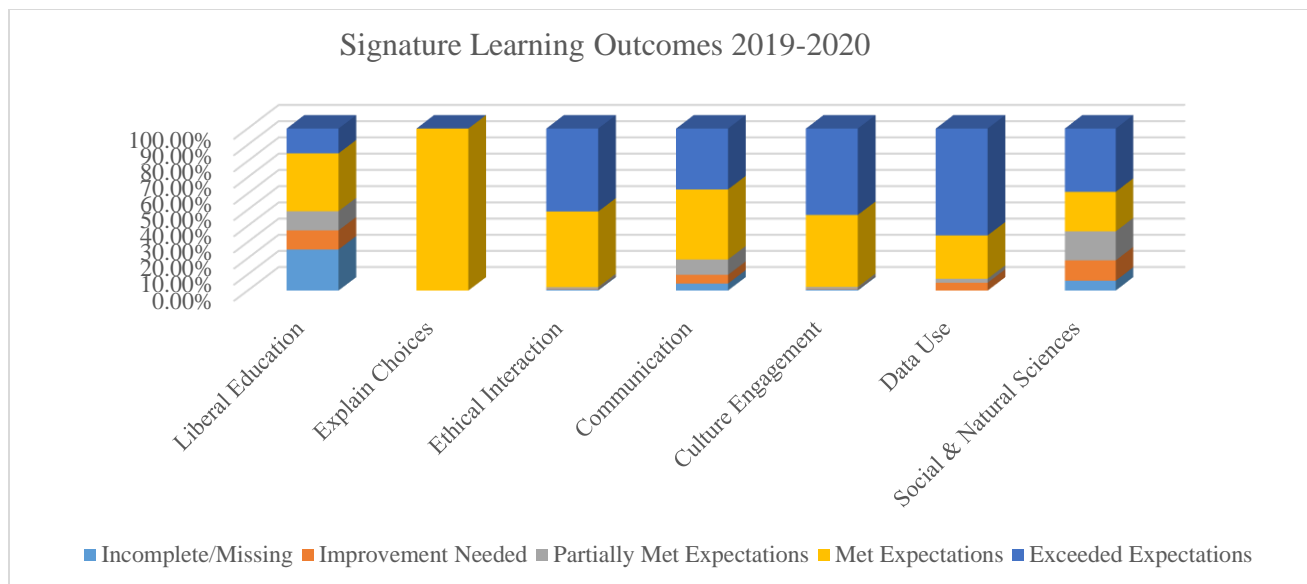| Signature Learning Outcomes	Number of Courses	Total Student Assessments	Student Achievement				
			Exceeded Expectations	Met Expectations	Partially Met Expectations	Improvement Needed	Incomplete or Missing
Liberal Education	6	236	15.3%	35.6%	11.9%	11.9%	25.4%
Explain Choices	2	96	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Ethical Interaction	9	327	51.1%	46.8%	1.2%	0.3%	0.6%
Communication	25	441	37.4%	43.3%	9.5%	5.4%	4.3%
Culture Engagement	8	316	53.2%	44.6%	1.3%	0.3%	0.6%
Data Use	2	41	65.9%	26.8%	2.4%	4.9%	0.0%
Social and Natural Sciences	8	262	38.9%	24.4%	17.9%	12.6%	6.1%

Figure 1. Student Achievement Levels on Signature Learning Outcomes 2019-2020

As noted above, programs were encouraged to assess effective communication in upper-level or capstone courses. The results reported above were in 300- and 400-level courses, except for two courses. After removing the results from those courses, 352 of the 463 students assessed (81%) met or exceeded achievement expectations, yet performance levels varied across courses. In only 15 of the 23 courses (65.22%) did 80% or more of the students meet the threshold of *Met Expectations* or higher. In four courses, small class sizes (under 10 students) make percentages a less effective benchmark. In addition, three of the courses with lower percentages were taught in Spring 2020, where performance levels may have been impacted by changes associated with the COVID pandemic. These results are preliminary and it will be important to look at assessments in these courses across future semesters.

Assessment of the other six Signature Learning Outcomes was carried out in fewer courses and with fewer students than Communication. At the institutional-level, 100 percent of students met the learning outcome expectations for Explaining Choices, 98 percent for Ethical Interaction, 98 percent for Cultural Engagement, and 93 percent for Data Use. The results for Liberal Arts and Social and Natural Sciences were less positive with 51 percent and 63 percent of students, respectively, reaching the threshold of *Met Expectations*. Achievement levels were widely varying for Liberal Arts across the six courses. Perhaps this reflects the broader set of skills and types of measures used in this outcome. Further examination of the courses in which the Social and Natural Sciences outcome was assessed showed that the data included results from one 100-level course, the rest being 300- and 400-level. When results from this course are excluded, 81 percent of students *Met Expectations*. Since numbers are small, further investigation is needed in these areas before any firm conclusions can be drawn.

Program/Unit Assessment Reports

Assessment reports for 2019-2020 were produced at the program-level from the Campus Labs *Outcomes* information through the Campus Labs *Planning* module (see Appendix A). Planning templates were designed to capture the learning outcomes assessed in 2019-2020, the assessment measures used, whether assessment occurred at the course- or program-level, in which course if at the course-level, the results and analysis, and planned changes ensuing from that analysis. Members of the Institutional Effectiveness Committee reviewed the reports and gave feedback to the programs. Planning templates were developed

to capture similar information across the assessment cycle for 2020-2021 and program faculty and staff will be instructed on how to utilize the *Planning* module, as well as the *Outcomes* module.

Campus Labs Usage

Implementation of the Campus Labs modules of *Outcomes*, *Rubrics*, and *Planning* has allowed the institution to collect, store, integrate, and analyze assessment data more effectively than in the past. In the first year of its implementation, the majority of programs have actively entered results allowing for the aggregation of data pertaining to the Signature Learning Outcomes across both curricular and co-curricular programs. Programs have been able to capture student achievement on program learning outcomes as well, which will allow for easier analysis of year-over-year trends. When faculty and staff import or enter individual student results into *Outcomes* (rather than the total number of students at each achievement level), more advanced analyses are possible linking learning outcome data to specific student variables, such as student class-level (see Figure 2), major, or ethnicity/race.
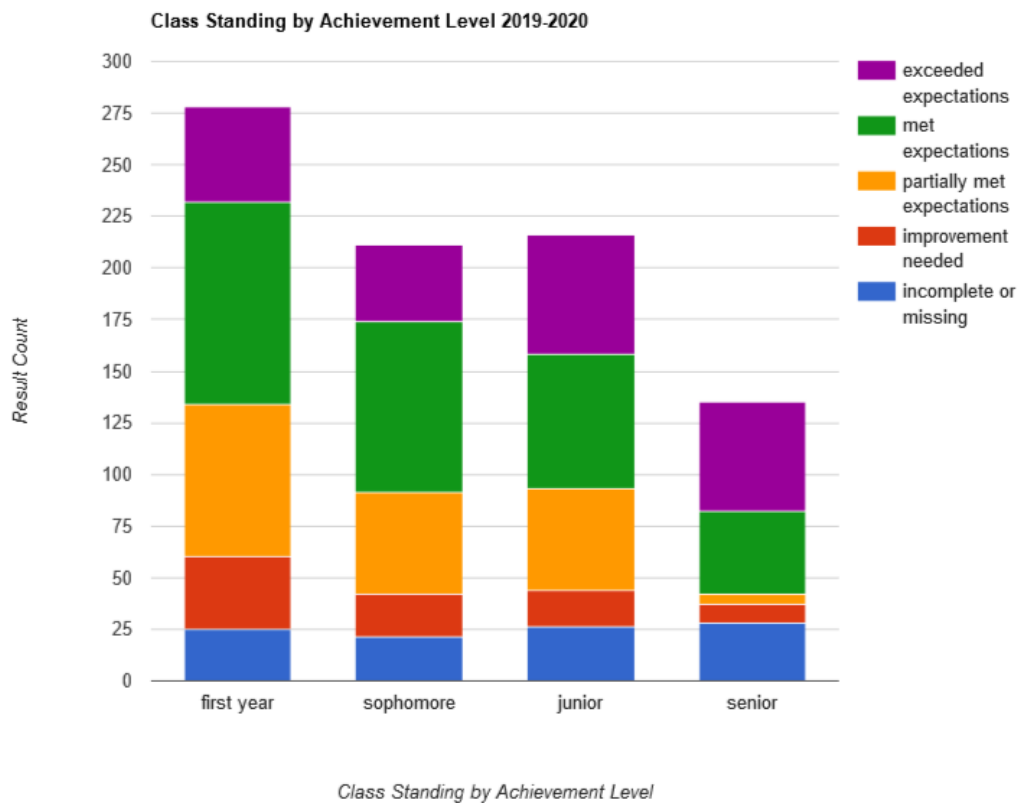

Figure 2. Class Standing by Achievement Level for Results of Individual Students

These results are preliminary, especially as they include only assessments for identified students. In addition, they reflect an aggregation across all outcomes and across course levels, so any interpretation is limited to a general perspective. Lastly, the results may reflect multiple results from individual students, but these analyses foreshadow the potential usage of the integrated data platforms.

<u>Program Review Process</u>

Capital University has an established five-year schedule for program reviews. In 2019-2020, the following programs were slated to undergo review: the Center for Health and Wellness, Computer Science, Education (undergraduate and graduate programs), Mathematics, and Social Work. Associate Provost for Accreditation and Analytics Jens Hemmingsen met with program faculty and staff over a series of sessions, starting in February 2020. The first addressed the development of effective mission statements and learning outcomes. Subsequent sessions covered the review and extension of a multi-year assessment of student learning outcomes and curriculum/activity mapping. Two additional sessions were planned to review the curriculum, evaluate student success data, and develop an improvement plan. These meetings were postponed until the 2020-2021 academic year due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the stay-at-home order enacted in March 2020. Programs will summarize their work in a culminating program review report.

<u>Summary</u>

Assessment of student learning outcomes was ongoing throughout the institution in 2019-2020, at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. In addition to assessing program-specific outcomes, academic and co-curricular programs contributed to the assessment of institutional Signature Learning Outcomes. With the adoption and implementation of *Campus Labs/Anthology* integrated data platforms, the institution has shifted to a new level of data collection and analysis. These new capabilities will stimulate additional questions and discussions across the institution in the efforts to enhance the quality of education and student experience at Capital University.

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