

Concord University

Annual University Assessment Report

2021-2022

Dr. Amanda Sauchuck

Director of University Assessment

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## University Assessment

Concord University's Assessment of academic achievement is used to make informed curricular and instructional decisions for the purpose of improving student learning. Concord University has an ongoing assessment program that is closely tied to the University's mission and its educational goals.

Concord University believes that assessment is critical to the success of academic programs and student learning. Currently, the Director of University Assessment oversees and organizes assessment activities. A campus-wide University Assessment Committee (UAC) comprised of representatives from administration, academic support units, each academic program, student affairs, and the student government reviews assessment plans/reports and acts as a resource for program assessment. Concord University's assessment process has evolved over the last decade. The University has focused on the development of programmatic and university-wide assessment based on data collection and analysis.

In keeping with the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission's (WVHEPC) Series 10-Policy Regarding Program Review, Concord University's Board of Governors is responsible for reviewing the viability, adequacy, necessity, and consistency with the University's mission all programs offered by the institution at least once every five years and reporting the results of the program review to the WVHEPC. The WVHEPC is responsible for reviewing the productivity of the University's academic programs for the purpose of continuing or terminating the program. In keeping with

WVHEPC Policy, approximately 20% of the University's programs are reviewed each year.

Each five-year program review includes a self-study that addresses the University's mission, program faculty, the curriculum, resources, student learning outcomes, other learning and service activities, program viability including five-year trend data on majors and graduates, and recommendations for program improvement. As specified by WVHEPC policy, each five-year program review must be reviewed by an evaluator from outside the program or outside the institution, as well as by University administrators, and the institutional governing board. At Concord, the outside evaluation is conducted by the University Assessment Committee, the Provost and President, and the Concord University Board of Governors.

In addition to each five-year program review, each academic program is expected to conduct annual program assessment reviews and submit a report to the University Assessment Committee. These reports use a common template to provide programmatic summary data and analysis for each academic year that is used to inform program faculty and drive indicated changes. The annual University Assessment reports are reviewed by the University Assessment Committee and written feedback/recommendations are provided to program department chairs, deans, and University administrators.

## **University Learning Goals and Outcomes**

### **Goal #1: Knowledge/Mastery of Content**

Students will demonstrate a depth of knowledge and apply the methods of inquiry in a discipline of their choosing, and they will demonstrate a breadth of knowledge across varied disciplines.

### **Goal #2: Critical Thinking**

Student will demonstrate the ability to access, analyze, and interpret information, respond and adapt to changing situations, make complex decisions, solve problems, and evaluate actions.

### **Goal #3: Communication**

Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and effectively.

### **Goal #4: Personal, Civic, Cultural and Global Competence**

Students will demonstrate awareness and understanding of the skills necessary to live and work in a diverse world.

## **General Education Assessment**

Concord University's general education assessment process is designed to sustain and strengthen student learning across the core courses as well as programmatic progression. In the 2021-2022 academic year, a total of 401 distinct courses assessed general education outcomes from one of the four learning goals.

The tables below illustrate the overall learning outcome average for the fall 2021 and the spring to spring comparison.

Figure 1: Fall 2021 General Education Assessment Data

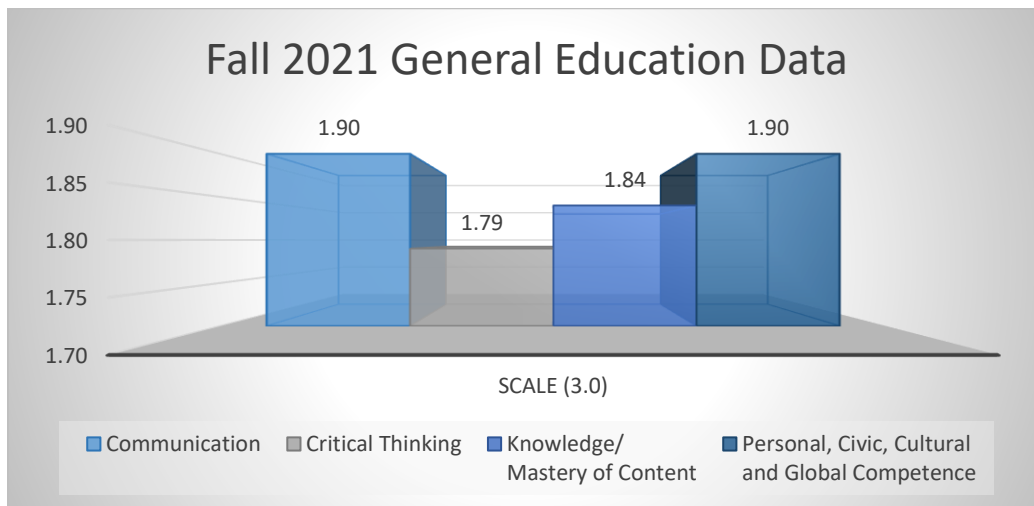
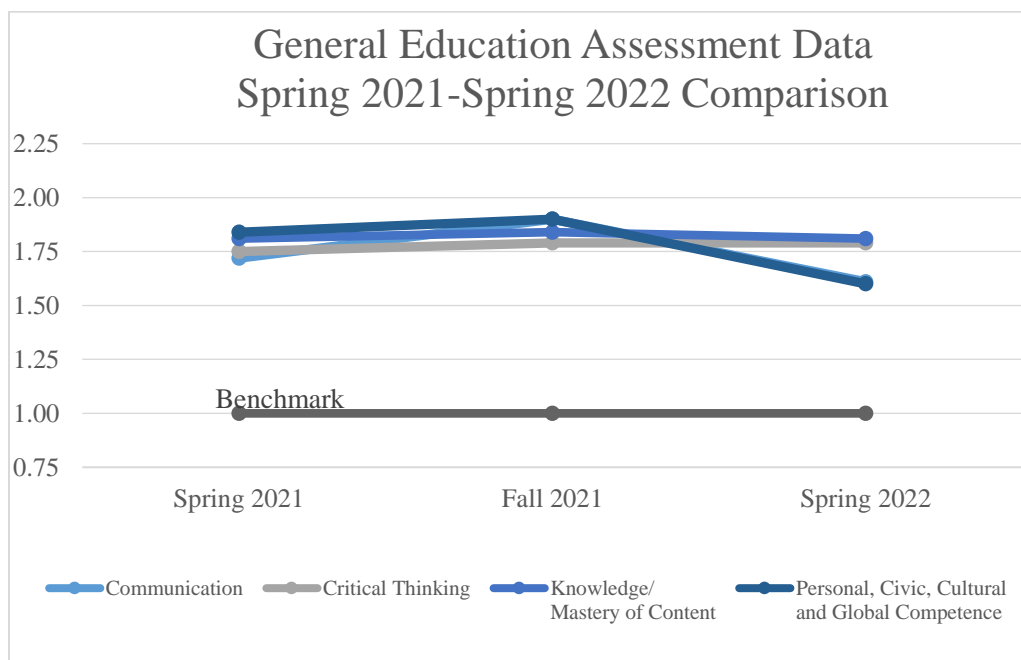


Figure 2: Spring to Spring General Education Assessment Data



Each area assessed in general education saw a slight increase from the previous year. Knowledge/Mastery of content stayed consistent over the 1.00 benchmark. The benchmark for general education is set at Satisfactory (1). Although each area consistently scored above the benchmark, programs continue to analyze data and review for improvement. Assessment data retrieved from General Education is shared

with the assessment committee, department chairs, deans, and provost. Data comparison from the previous three semesters is also posted on the assessment committee website. Departments are encouraged to review data with faculty and make plans for improvements, if needed.

### **Annual Program Assessment Reports**

All University academic programs (excluding programs up for 5-year program review) submitted an Annual Assessment Report in 2021. Included in these reports were data on indicators of program specific goals as well as the disciplines contribution to learning in the General Education curriculum. University Assessment Committee members reviewed the reports and, where applicable, suggested improvements. In addition to academic programs, academic support programs, or co-curricular activities, have been integrated into the University assessment process. A separate section to address General Education assessment was added to the annual assessment reports as of fall 2021. The purpose of this section to identify program courses that are included in the general education curriculum, the University Goal that is assessed and how. After review, all reports are forwarded to department chairs and/or supervisors. Several academic disciplines have expanded their curricula as a result of feedback from assessment reports. Key findings and recommendations are noted below.

### **5-Year Program Reviews**

Five programs were scheduled for program reviews during the 2016-2021 academic year including Biology, Computer Science, Computer Information Systems, Chemistry, and Environmental Geoscience. After providing recommendations, the

University Assessment Committee submits 5-year program review summaries to the Provost and Board of Governors for approval. When reviewing the 5-year program reviews, attention is given to the enrollment and program graduates, viability and program cost factors, adequacy and rationale for the program, assessment of student learning, and consistency with mission.

### *5-Year Program Review Findings & Recommendations*

Recommendations for improvements were given to four out of the five programs. Consistent areas to improve upon included assessment, plans for future progress, better data tracking for graduate information, and increase recruitment and retention efforts.

Programs should work toward annual assessment reports that identify where University and programmatic goals and outcomes are addressed and assessed with quantitative data. Using data, faculty should document how analysis and review of data resulted in changes or adjustments of course material or reinforcements within the classroom. Program reports should illustrate benchmarks and plans for improvement to meet and exceed these benchmarks.

Future plans are a result of a clear program identity and direction of where the program is going and how the program will meet its goals. Future plans or upcoming changes should be addressed within the program review plans. Plans should be a result of data, working with employers, research, etc. Plans may include how to strengthen recruitment and/or retention efforts and how to better track graduate and employer satisfaction data.



## University Assessment Goals

During this academic year, the University Assessment Committee set University Assessment Goals. The goals of University Assessment are to:

- Provide and maintain a formal assessment plan for the university, including a statement of the university's learning goals and a system of regularly reporting the extent to which they are being achieved
- Provide a system by which units of the college will regularly assess their own performance and assist faculty/staff in reporting as needed
- Integrate assessment with planning, both at the level of the strategic plan and the level of departments, programs, and offices of the university
- Maintain expertise in methods of assessment and act as a resource for individuals and areas on campus that seek to improve their educational impact
- Gather, summarize, and share what practitioners at Concord University are learning about student learning
- Assess and advance student learning by working with and collaborating with faculty
- Serve as a campus resource for faculty and staff from across the university who are engaging in assessment, and seek out partnerships with curricular and co-curricular groups

## Co-Curriculum

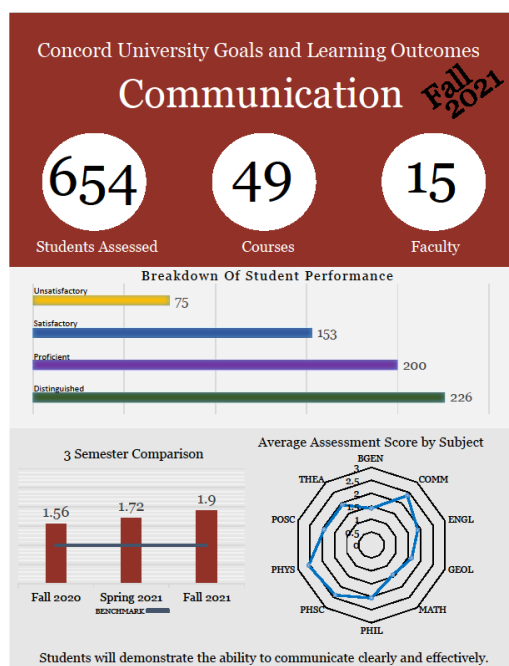
Co-curricular at Concord University includes programs and activities that complement the curriculum, enhance student experience, and reinforce the University's Mission and Student Learning Goals.

Examples: student research opportunities, domestic and international study trips, internships and practicum, service organizations and student government, honor societies, athletics, etc. Concord assesses co-curricular programs in multiple areas across campus including Bonner Scholar, CACD, Housing and Res Life, Multicultural Affairs, Student Activities, and Student Support Services.

These are areas that reinforce our University Learning Goals.

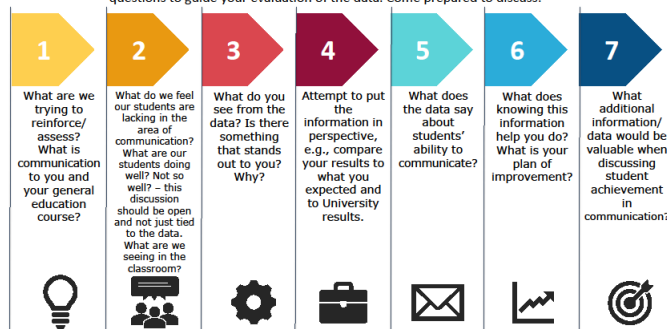
### General Education Assessment Day – Spring 2022

The University held an Assessment day devoted to the University Assessment Goal Communication. Held on Friday, April 15, faculty who had submitted assessment data on the goal Communication were invited to attend the meeting. Lunch was provided by the UAC. The agenda included a review of recent General Education data, the communication rubric, group discussions, and recommendations/improvements for the future. The following documents were submitted to faculty prior to the meeting.



### MAKING MEANING OF ASSESSMENT DATA

Review the general education data and reflect on our goal of Communication. Use the following questions to guide your evaluation of the data. Come prepared to discuss.



Each attending faculty also received individualized data.

As a result of the Assessment Day, a 'University Assessment Resource Page' located on the Intranet was created. This page includes faculty assessment artifacts and resources collected to assist faculty across campus to reinforce and assess general education goals.

### Upcoming Changes/Area for Improvement

Several steps will be made in the 2021-2022 academic year to continue strengthening the assessment process within Concord University. The following initiatives have been identified to continue a culture of assessment and for faculty to clearly help facilitate the alignment of University mission, goals, and learning outcomes:

- Increased faculty involvement
- Critical Thinking Assessment Day
- Helping faculty link data/assessment results to decision making
- Continue bi-annual assessment newsletter

## References

University Assessment. (2019). *Concord University*. Retrieved from  
<https://www.concord.edu/About/History-Future/University-Assessment.aspx>

# Appendix

## Concord University Goals Preamble

Concord University strives to ensure that students come away from their experience with knowledge and skills that will enable them to fulfill their personal and professional aspirations and awareness in respect to their chosen discipline. The learning goals and outcomes are derived from national research and best practices surrounding liberal arts education and Concord University's mission. The goals are a shared vision of what is expected of all Concord graduates. The educational programs of Concord University are designed to foster knowledge/mastery of content, critical thinking, communication, and personal, civic, cultural, and global competence.

General education, the core of all undergraduate curricula, is an essential element in an educational process designed around student learning expectations. Continuous improvement of courses, curricula, and programs is essential for institutions to ensure the improvement and sustainability of student learning and effective instruction. Assessment of general education is not only necessary to satisfy accrediting bodies and stakeholders, but to provide evidence to answer our own question – Did students learn what we wanted them to learn? (Assessing General Education Programs, Allen, 2006)

## University Goals and Learning Outcomes

### *1. Knowledge/Mastery of Content*

Students will demonstrate a depth of knowledge and apply the methods of inquiry in a discipline of their choosing, and they will demonstrate a breadth of knowledge across varied disciplines.

### *2. Critical Thinking*

Student will demonstrate the ability to access, analyze, and interpret information, respond and adapt to changing situations, make complex decisions, solve problems, and evaluate actions.

### *3. Communication*

Students will demonstrate the ability to communicate clearly and effectively.

### *4. Personal, Civic, Cultural, and Global Competence*

Students will demonstrate awareness and understanding of the skills necessary to live and work in a diverse world.

## A Statement on the Philosophy of Assessment and Our University Goals

Concord's mission is clear: to provide a quality, liberal arts education that fosters scholarship, creativity, and service. Our university goals are the principal means to assess the effectiveness of our efforts to accomplish that mission. They provide a measurable, manageable, and efficient means of assessment. They render us accountable to our students, faculty, administrators, and, as a public university, the wider community. They provide a comprehensive definition of the parameters of our mission. Finally, they are inclusive, applicable to all of Concord's academic programs, co-curricular and other activities. (T. J. Mc Kenna, 2018)